# BLUE BOOK

MAGAZINE

Adventure in Fact and Fiction

July
25c

Men of America . . . Israel Putnam—*Painted by* John Fulton

**UNDERWATER DEMOLITION TEAM**

*By Edward Higgins, with Dean Phillips*

*Two short Novels and thirteen Short Stories, including:*

**TIME EXPOSURE** *by Nelson Bond*

MEN OF AMERICA . . . ISRAEL PUTNAM

# Born *for* Battle

FOR thirty-seven years Israel Putnam had lived the life of a quiet Connecticut farmer, before he became one of the great soldiers of America. He had never exploded powder at a human target before. And yet from his first day in the army, he took to war like a natural; he seemed born for battle. The very first autumn of his service, General Phinehas Lyman—that Connecticut lawyer who proved himself the best general in the northern army, if the British had only had the wit to know it—read Israel's talents right, and assigned him to that special force known as the Rangers. And so Israel became at once a comrade and co-officer with that genius of forest warfare, Robert Rogers.

The Rangers were the commandos of that day. They were the finest forest fighters the world has known. They were the one untarnished glory on the Anglo-American side during the war, and they are legends in the military history of America. They slipped like death's own shadows through the dangerous woods, dressed in green for camouflage, greased like Indians to shed rain and flies.

The many exploits of Israel Putnam in the Revolution and in the French and Indian wars (once the Indians captured him and were about to burn him at the stake when a thunderstorm intervened) are ably described by Merrill Root in his article "The Old Wolf," which begins on page 62. Our artist has chosen for his cover painting, however, what is probably the best known of Putnam's feats—his escape from the British by riding his horse down a cliff.

A British force under General Tryon set out to raid an American salt refinery in Connecticut. Israel gathered all available men, and met the onslaught with his inferior but unintimidated force. He drew up the American troops, with a couple of field-pieces, beside a church at the top of a high hill.

The British, however, began a flanking maneuver. Thereupon the Old Wolf sent his troops down the relatively easy slope of the hill on their right, and held the ground alone, firing the field-pieces in the face of the dragoons. They fanned out with such speed that his own escape was cut off on the right, till his only chance was the desperate remedy of riding to the left down the slope of the hill so steep that it has been variously described as a "cliff" and a "precipice." It is difficult to know just what it was like then, for the years and men have changed the contours of things. Now Israel, caught at last it seemed by the converging dragoons, turned his horse to the descent and went plunging down. Only a superb rider could have kept his seat and guided his horse, only a horse that trusted his rider would have obeyed, only a man of the utmost audacity would have dared the ride. Even the tough, saddle-happy dragoons drew rein at the rim, firing their pistols at the stout general who had dared the plunge, and shooting his hat off. (Tryon, in a gesture of chivalry, sent him a new one to take its place!) So the Old Wolf escaped once more by choosing the lonely road of danger.

## Readers' Comment

### Of Importance to Every American

I HAVE been deeply impressed by an article "Where Do We Go From Korea?" by Colonel Charles Wellington Furlong in the current issue of your magazine. This summary of today's geopolitical problems and his analysis of the probable course of events to come have caused me to keep it in my library for reference.

My service during the last war in the Middle East and Mediterranean areas gives me an added measure of respect for Colonel Furlong's experience and his evaluation of information. The article is of importance to every American.

Henry A. Hale, Col. Inf. Ret'd

### More Fact and Experience?

WHILE searching a magazine stand recently I came across the March issue of BLUE BOOK. Being a private pilot, the article on "A Forgotten Air Race" by C. Lester Walker immediately caught my eye.

I found this article so interesting that before I hardly realized it I had read the entire section on "Fact and Experience." It is unfortunate indeed, that our magazines of the past could not have been filled with more educational material such as "War Gods of the Orient." A more enlightening view of the true ambitions of our Oriental neighbors has never been written.

I can only suggest that more and more articles such as those found in "Fact and Experience" be published.

Ben K. Barker

### An Evangelist Steals

FOR twenty-five years I have followed the calling of an evangelist. After a long-drawn-out campaign of trying to drive the devil out of people, I am weary in body and mind and I like something that is clean to read, yet has no bearing on my fight for a better world. I found just what I wanted many years ago when I discovered your BLUE BOOK.

Sorry to confess that I stole the first BLUE BOOK I ever read. Some twenty years ago I was waiting for a train, in Union Station, Chicago, and while waiting, I looked over some magazines at the news-stand. Suddenly I heard my train being called. I rushed madly through the gate and did not discover, until the train had pulled out of the station, that I still held a magazine in my hand for which I had failed to pay. Yes, you guessed it, BLUE BOOK. I have not missed many copies since. Who was it said "A preacher won't steal?"

V. B. Starnes


# BLUE BOOK

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## Two Short Novels


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**Cover Design** Men of America—Israel Putnam
*Painted by John Fulton.*

**Who's Who in This Issue** Inside Back Cover


*The short stories and novels herein are fiction and intended as such. They do not refer to real characters or actual events. If the name of any living person is used, it is a coincidence.*


PHILLIPS WYMAN, *Publisher* DONALD KENNICOTT, *Editor*

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# O'er *the* Ramparts

FROM THAT HIGH VALHALLA OF THE VALIANT, AMERICA'S GREAT CAPTAINS LOOK DOWN UPON OUR FAR-FLUNG BATTLE LINE.

*by* ZACHARY BALL

THERE were still a few stars alive in the sky, blinking palely against the high dawn that was crusting the shoulder of the mountain where writhing silver streamers of morning mist stalked the ridge.

The two men walked shoulder to shoulder as they trudged against the upward slope of the hunched, wet back of the rocky ridge, the mist seeming to cling to them as they walked.

"The techniques used today sometimes frighten me in their brilliance of execution," Jackson was saying.

Beauregard's swarthy face pulled into a smile as he said in his mild, French-tinged voice: "There are certain techniques that will never be improved upon, Jonathan."

Stonewall Jackson glanced at him questioningly.

Beauregard was still smiling. "Being where the enemy least expects you to be, is one," he said. "And no man ever demonstrated that more forcefully than yourself. I'm thinking, of course, of Chancellorsville."

Jackson made no reply.

They walked in thoughtful silence until they came to where the high ridge ended in a plateau. They stopped and stood looking down into the gray-dark valley below. A feeling of unrest was upon them now. And when they heard the footsteps behind them, they both turned to stare down along the ridge. In a moment they saw the man plunge out of the mist and come up the slope toward them, almost at a run.

"Can you make out who he is?" Beauregard asked.

"Yes, I can now," Jackson said after a moment. "He's new among us. Old Blood and Guts, his men called him."

"Ah, yes. I remember him now," Beauregard chuckled. "They say that when he attended West Point he had a record for poor spelling that was unsurpassed even by Washington's."

Patton, helmet low on his head, the early light glinting on its stars and the white handles of his twin revolvers, surged to a stop near them and stood glaring down into the valley, jaw hard and eyes challenging.

No one spoke.

The soft distant drone of a big plane motor came to them faintly; then a B-29, flanked by two fighter planes, took shape against the aluminum band of the eastern sky. They all watched it make a swing to the southward, then begin circling high over the valley.

"Douglas' plane," Patton said, talking to himself. "I wonder what he's looking for?"

Now Pershing and Sherman came up the ridge, walking side by side, their uniforms looking almost black in the misty half-light.

Words of greeting were passed among the five; then they stood together, searching the valley, a vague feeling of depression shrouding all of them.

NEXT to arrive were Custer and Lee. "The offensive," Lee was saying as they came up, "should never be undertaken until the means of sustaining it are at hand."

"But things have changed since our time, Robert," Custer said. They came to a halt beside the others. "Patton, here, will tell you they have."

George Patton didn't take his eyes from the valley, where daylight, cutting through the mist now, was silvering the terrain. Suddenly a blast of artillery shook the stillness down there.

The big plane was still circling, lower now, and they all watched it in silence.

Then Lee said: "I wonder who it is?"

"MacArthur," Patton told him. "Reconnaissance." He put his gaze again into the valley. "But I can't make out his front lines."

"I can," Custer said, and pointed through a rift in the valley mist to a thin line of helmeted men.

"Good God! Look what that handful of boys is up against!" Pershing exclaimed, and pointed out a mass of armored vehicles that were moving down from the north.

"They're in a trap," Custer groaned. "Exactly like what Reno and I got into at the Little Big Horn. We had no idea of the strength of the enemy that day, and neither have those lads."

"Pull those men back and wait for replacements!" Patton whispered angrily, and the whisper was like a shouted command.

"Against such numerically superior forces, they must fall back," Pershing said thoughtfully. "There is nothing else they can do."

There was the sudden *zoom, zoom* of bazooka fire far down the valley, then silence again.

Sherman said: "Do any of you know why we're here?"

"As always," Lee told him, "we have been called together on orders of the Chief."

"To be sure, but why?" Jackson wanted to know.

Custer turned and looked back down the ridge the way they had come. "It is odd that he would order us here to witness action of as little importance as this appears to be. Always in the past it has been to view some startling innovation, such as the first tanks, the dive bombers, the launching of the first submarine and the first aircraft carrier."

"True, it has always been when another milestone was reached," Lee said, stroking his beard thoughtfully. "The atomic tests on the New Mexico desert, and at Bikini Atoll."

"Sights to shrivel the imagination, those explosions!" Pershing said, shaking his head. "And the Chief hasn't been himself since that time. Anyone can see that he's worried, very, very worried."

"Like Custer, I don't see what there

*Drawn by* BRENDAN LYNCH

is of significance here," Sherman said, his eyes searching the valley, where the mist was now shredding itself into thin layers of drifting white.

Overhead, the big plane droned on and on.

"Supply lines," Patton growled, his eyes still on the pitifully weak line of Americans down there. "Where are your supply lines?"

Lee glanced at him and smiled quietly, then said to the others: "Supply lines are a sore spot with young George here."

"They certainly are!" Patton snapped.

Custer took off his hat and passed a hand over his gray-yellow hair as his eyes again sought the ridge slope behind them. "Well," he said, "we'll soon know why we've been ordered here."

They all turned and stood in respectful silence to watch the white-

haired man trudging up the slope, his tri-cornered hat in his hand, and looking very old and helpless without his horse. He had always seemed ageless to them before, but not now.

To a man, they saluted as he stopped before them. As his kindly eyes moved across their faces, pride lived in a fleeting half-smile; then the smile was gone, and the face was again etched in worry as he turned to look into the valley.

AFTER a long moment he said without turning his head, "We have all had our bad moments. Your Appomattox, Lee—your Charleston and Savannah, Beauregard—your Argonne, Black Jack—your Casablanca, Patton. . . . They were all important to us at the time, and all vital to the whole broad scheme of freedom. But this," and his hand swept over the valley, "is more important than any of them."

"This!" Patton exclaimed impatiently. "What is important about this two-bit sniping party?"

There was more bazooka fire in the valley, then the chatter of M-1s, and farther away, heavier explosions.

"It is important," Washington said, "because we're entering the final phase." All eyes were turned searchingly upon his face. After a long moment he said wearily: "I saw the beginning. The rest of you know what followed. Now we are nearing the end."

There was a long silence in which no one moved; then Lee asked in his gentle way, "Do you mean for all time, General?"

Washington nodded. "For all time, I hope."

Jackson's lips moved; then words came. "Peace or total destruction, General?"

"Peace, Jonathan. Freedom. The things we all fought for."

Again there was the rattle of rifle fire, punctuated by the rumble of tank guns and the spewing of the bazookas. They all watched the exchange of fire until it came to an abrupt end.

"Those poor kids are outnumbered a hundred to one down there!" Patton growled.

Washington nodded. "But this is only the beginning. They will be forced to retreat and retreat again, and it will still be but the beginning."

The B-29 with its fighter escort headed eastward, and they watched it until the morning sky took it.

A sudden brisk wind gushed up the slope behind them, then died as suddenly as it was born.

"Who is coming?" Washington said, and they all turned, listening to the crunching footsteps. Then a helmeted man came through the thinning mist, climbing wearily toward them.

"Does anyone know him?" Sherman asked.

After a moment Patton said tightly: "I know him. I ought to. And they needed him down there, too." He walked briskly down the slope to meet Lieutenant General Walker.

When they had come up and all saluted, Washington indicated a low shelf of rock and said kindly: "Sit down, Walton. You must be tired."

Walker smiled wearily. "Yes, I'm tired, General. But then we all know what it is to be tired." He turned his weary gaze into the valley. "Those boys down there are tired, too. But that's what we're going to buy it with, General. Aching muscles and frozen feet and empty bellies." He smiled at Washington. "The same things you bought it with at Valley Forge, sir."

Patton said: "Listen!"

A moment later they all heard it, a high singing whine. All eyes searched the blue-white bowl of the sky.

"Where are they?" Patton asked in a whisper. "What are they?"

"Jets," Walker said. "Ours and the MIG-15s. There they are!"

And then they all saw them, so high that they were black pinpoints, spearing at each other in a small cluster against the clear, high distance.

The moments were long grinding things, creaking away into eternity as the men stood watching in a sharp unthawed agony of tension.

"God, what a dogfight!" Patton said in a hoarse whisper.

"I can't tell which are our boys," Pershing said.

Walker's face was tied up stiff and hard as winter knots. "You'll know in a minute."

In the next instant two of the jet-fighters were plummeting earthward, leaving thin black pencil marks down the sky.

"Those two," Walker said grimly, "are not ours. Now watch the MIGs streak for safety over the border."

"Yeah, there they go!" Patton snarled. "Hit and run for safety! Twelve of them against five of ours!"

"Only ten of them going home," Walker grinned.

A moment later the sky was empty, and all eyes again turned to the sad face of their Commander in Chief, who was now looking off across the valley into the bloody dawn, both hands gripping his tri-cornered hat.

"Those boys down there!" he mused. "No, we have not softened. Whatever comes against us, the liberties of the country are safe. . . . And yet. . . . Foreign entanglements. . . . Who could have foreseen this!"

THE STORY OF A RACE DRIVER AND A WELL-LOVED KID BROTHER SO EAGER TO FOLLOW THE SAME PERILOUS PATH.

# by WILLIAM CAMPBELL GAULT

I REMEMBER hearing the bed springs squeak, and I kept breathing even and heavy so he'd think I was asleep. I remember the squeak of the stairs and I waited until I heard the back door close real quiet, down below.

Then I got up and slipped into my mocs, and lit a cigarette and sat by the window. Crazy, that's Johnny. Was I that crazy, before the war? I guess I was. The way I used to wheel that rod, I guess I was crazy, all right. I guess all kids are. In this country, anyway.

I got the cigarette half done, and went down the stairs and out to the garage and snapped on the light, and there he sat.

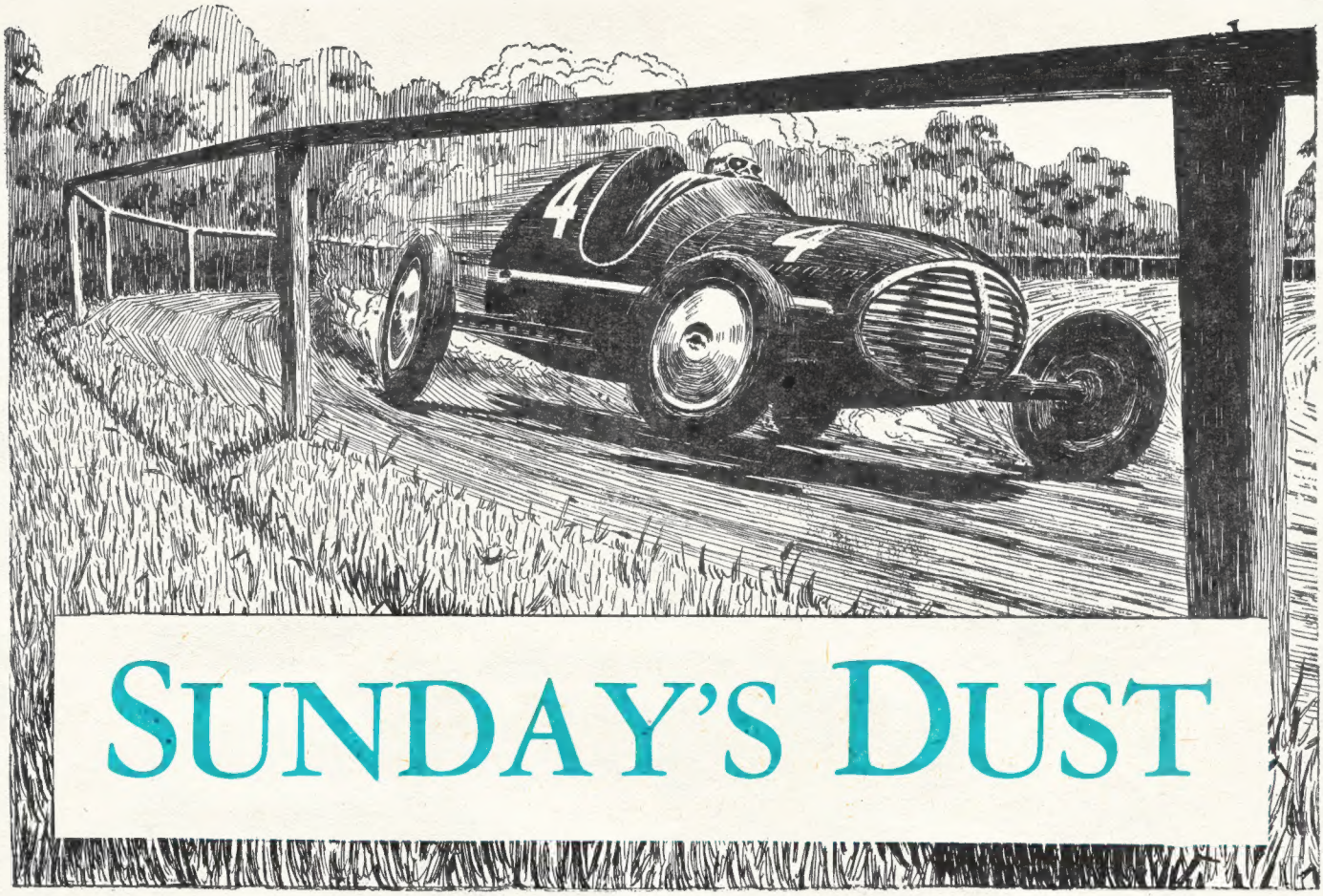
In the Special, in *my* sweetheart, with *my* goggles on, and leaning like he was high on the bend, fighting the whip. The Special as quiet and still as a stone, but boy, was Johnny traveling!

"Johnny, for God's sakes," I said. "You're nuts."

"Aw, Pete, I'm not hurting anything. What am I hurting?"

"You're interrupting my sleep. What kind of kick do you get out of that, here in the dark, the motor not even running?"

"Well, you won't let me wheel her."



# SUNDAY'S DUST

*I got the chills, just looking at him. He was too hot and too fast for this track.*

"When your brain's as heavy as your foot, I'll let you wheel her. You're too hot for that heap, Johnny. You've got to get some savvy."

"How can I learn? You don't want me to learn. Pit monkey I'm good enough for, but you won't even let me try her out, slow."

"Slow!" I said. "I can see you in the seat of that—slow. We'd have to hire a jet plane to catch you. I'll know when you're ready to try her."

"Nuts," he said. "Bull."

What could I tell him—that he's all I had? You don't say that to your brother. Ma dead and the old man living in L.A. with that floozie, who was there, but Johnny? But if I tried to tell him how I felt, he'd probably laugh. I wish I'd told him.

"Let's get back to the sack," I said.

"Some brother!" he said. "Won't talk about the war, won't let me wheel his iron, won't even let me sit in it, in the garage. Some brother I got."

About the war I should talk. That'll be the day, I tell him about that. That stinking island heat, and never knowing when those crazy little bastards would get full of saki and come screaming in, and Eddie with malaria, and those guys in B Company with elephantiasis, and the mud and the bloated dead and the damned waiting. He could be eight hundred years old and never hear about the war from me.

"Let's get back to the sack," I said again.

"What's wrong with just sitting here? Am I going to wear out this crummy imitation leather you got on the seat?"

"Nothing's wrong," I said patiently, "except you're not getting your sleep. Tomorrow's Sunday, and you're going to have to be awake if you want to work my pit."

"Pit. Pit-monkey Johnny. Johnny the grease-ball. Check the rubber, Johnny. Those water-cans full? Keep this place looking sharp, boy." He climbed out of the Special. "Who you kidding, Pete? Work the pit."

"All right," I said, "I'll get Andy Jasper."

"Get him."

SAYING no more to me, walking ahead of me without words up the stairs and to bed, and climbing in.

I sat on my bed, and looked at his back. "You haven't even got a license." The room was full of moonlight.

"The hell I haven't. I got it two weeks ago. Do I have to tell you everything?"

"You don't have to tell me anything, Johnny," I said. "I'm sorry, kid." And then one of those crazy moods came over me. "Maybe you'd better go to L.A. and live with the old man."

You'd think there was a snake in his bed, the way that he sat up. "Pete—"

What a nice guy I was! What a sweet so-and-so the war had made out of me. It would have been better if I'd hit him with a tire iron.

The moonlight on his sick face, and he was staring at me as though I was some kind of monster, which I was.

I found a smile, to give him. "Don't worry," I said. "We'll always be together, Johnny. I was mad and I shouldn't have said that. You'll never get me mad enough to send you to *him*, Johnny."

Why wasn't I his mother, so I could hold him? Why hadn't the yacobees cut my tongue out, so I couldn't say what I'd said?

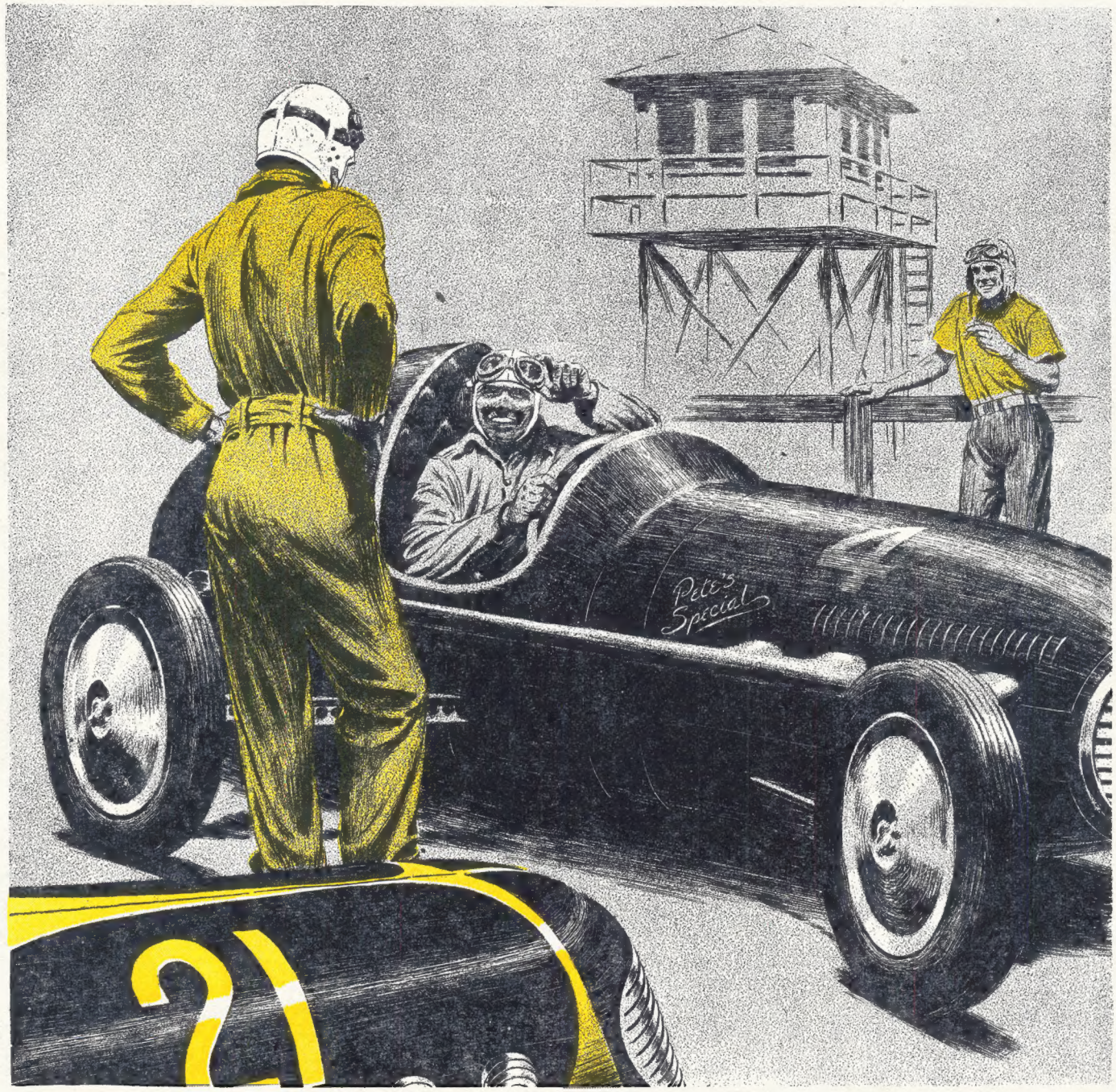
"Gee, Pete," he said, "you're like a crazy guy, sometimes."

"I know," I said.

"Since the war. The war, huh? That's why you don't want to talk about it?"

I nodded.

*Illustrated by Brendan Lynch*




*His grin was too wide for his face. "Watch my dust, Grandpa."*

"Aw, Pete—I don't give you a bad time—lots of guys are worse'n me."

"All of 'em," I said. "Johnny, last time you drove it, you had me sitting on razor blades. If I thought I could trust you, tomorrow morning—"

"Trust me. Pete. You're not kidding? Put a governor on it, disconnect a couple plugs, take off the tires—just so I could wheel her again."

"Not over sixty," I said. "Maybe seventy on the stretches."

"Fifty," he said. "Forty. What's the difference? Pete, you mean it, don't you?"

"I mean it," I said. "Now go to sleep."

"Sure. Hey, Pete, to hell with Andy Jasper, huh? We don't need anybody but us."

"That's right," I said. "That's all we need. Go to sleep."

He was quiet but I'd make book he wasn't sleeping. I sat by the window, smoking another cigarette, looking up the road to the fairgrounds. I could see the bleached stands and the north turn, still as death, hazy in the moonlight. I could hear the crickets and a plane heading north to Chicago and see the headlights of the Greyhound on the Plank Road.

Sunday dust and Sunday thunder. . . . Johnny and I knew it, growing up in this house. The guys that had run here, before our time, Milton and Murphy and De Palma and Barney and those guys.

It wasn't up to that now, this Jefferson oval, but it was making some money and I got my share of it. The Special was no new job, but it was a Miller and Harry Miller never built a bad one. I did all right. *We* did all right, me and Johnny.

SITTING there now, the thought of Eddie came, and I saw Al Kovatch fold, grabbing his belly, and Clem Yurner losing an arm—and I found the bottle in the desk and had a big,

quick one, and it worked, this time. They went away.

And I could hear the crickets again, and see the stands and the empty stock pavilion, and hear Johnny breathe.

You'd think it was last night, the way I can remember all that . . .

And next morning it was hot and cloudy, damp. Beautiful day for carburetion. I fried us some eggs and made toast, but the kid couldn't eat.

Motor-crazy, speed-crazy, and I'd promised him he could try her, slow.

He ate a half a piece of toast and drank some coffee.

"Let's go," he said. "What's holding you up? Leave the dishes. We can do 'em later."

I let him drive it over, and I followed in the rod. His rod it was, a V-8 with Johannsen ignition and Scofield heads and two Scofield pots. It really chopped 'em off, that tub. Johnny was a Grade-A mech.

ONLY one other car on the track, this morning: Dole Maling, in his battered green rocker-arm, just breezing.

Most pilots won't mess with green, but Dole isn't superstitious.

Johnny had her idling in the pits, waiting for me. "I left something in the rod," he said.

He went and got what he'd left from the glove compartment: A white helmet and new goggles.

"How do you like 'em?" he said. "I knew you couldn't hold out forever."

That kid. "You look like Shaw," I told him. "Keep a tight rein on her, now."

Dole came idling in, as Johnny moved out. He killed the motor and came over. "There goes the fence," he said.

"Shut up, Dole."

"Relax, Pete. You'll make a sis out of that kid, yet. It would be the toughest job in the world, but you could do it, the way you act."

"You got holes in your head, Dole." I looked at him, trying to read his face. Dole was no dummy.

"You're like a mother hen," he said. "He's got all the moxie you had at his age, and more sense, I think."

Maybe, maybe. . . . But what had he seen, where had he been, what had he done? It's too early for Johnny to ride with the Reaper; it's like dying in the crib. These things I thought, saying nothing.

Maybe Dole could read my mind. "There's two ways of dying," he said. "One way, they bury you; the other is living scared. I'd rather be buried than live scared."

"I'd rather be a live coward," I said.

"No, you wouldn't," he said. "And you wouldn't want Johnny to be. You keep hammering at that kid, you'll lose him, one way or another, Pete."

"He's *my* brother," I said. "He's *my* job."

"All right. I shouldn't have opened my mouth. Only remember this, Pete, we *all* love him."

And he walked back to his mill, lighting a cigarette, ignoring me. He sat on the fence as though I wasn't there.

And here Johnny came in the Special, out of the north, not even kicking dirt. You'd think he was driving a bus. He couldn't have been going more than thirty-five.

I went out to wave him down.

He slowed, stopped, not pulling into the pit. He looked at me puzzled. "Now what? Now what did I do?"

"You're not driving a tractor," I said. "You want to foul her up, idling like that? Barrel her, boy, get logging."

His grin was too wide for his face. "Hey, Pete, now you're really talking like a brother. Just watch my dust, Grandpa."

I went over to sit next to Dole. "Since the war," I said, "I'm— Oh, hell."

"The war," Dole said. "Six years of Triple-A driving behind me, and they made me a cook at Fort Sheridan."

Not me, they hadn't. I sat next to Dole on the fence, and Johnny started to make the Special sing. The rod, he'd driven in competition, but that Miller was no rod. Well, some guys are just naturally good.

Boring into the north, he was now, and drifting very little. A fan of grit littering the outer rail, but control he had and powering into the curve.

THE track got brighter and the sun warmer on my neck. I turned to see the sun coming out from the clouds in the east.

"It'll be a dry track today," Dole said.

A dry track, and dusty, with the disaster ridge piling up near the outer rail. Hard below and soft up high, a dry track.

Johnny went by, the black car and the white helmet, making music in the Special. The sun warm on my neck, the dust drifting in, and the two of us sitting there, while Johnny made music. I guess I'll never forget that.

He made her talk. He went slamming into the south without that pause of deceleration and I thought, *He can't be that good, nobody's that good to power all the way through.*

Grit flying, the Special screaming, both of us watching, waiting, wondering. And holding our breaths. Anyway, I was.

And then his traction took hold and his deck stopped sluing and he went gunning down into the backstretch.

"He's good," Dole said. "He's awful damned good, that guy."

"That he is," I said. "And young."

"The younger, the better, in this racket," Dole said. "He's better than any of us, that guy. He's better than any I've seen, and I've watched them since I was nine."

"There's things we've learned," I argued.

"Too much we've learned," he said, "and lost our moxie, learning. He was born to be great, that guy."

ANOTHER round, and the Special came chugging in. Johnny sure looked hopped up, when he took his goggles off, and his helmet.

"I've seen worse," I told him, "a lot worse." And then I said something I hadn't meant to say until this second. "Want to wheel her, this afternoon?"

He stared at me. Even Dole stared at me. If I'd have had another pair of eyes, I'd have been staring at myself. But the pair I had were on Johnny. He could hardly talk.

"Hey, Pete—you're kidding—hey, Pete."

Hey, Pete. . . . Was that all he knew—"hey, Pete?" I can hear him now, saying it, and that wasn't yesterday. That was too many yesterdays ago.

"I'm getting old," I lied, "and too many guys have shot at me. I need a rest this afternoon."

"Oh, boy!" he said. "Oh—baby!"

That was better than "hey, Pete."

He didn't want any lunch, either, but I made him eat it, and drink some milk, and listen to me.

"Watch that upper track. It's murder, toward the end of the afternoon. The dust piles there, and it's soft. You could die awful quick on that upper track, if you're barreling."

"You know a better place to die?" he asked. "Or a better way?"

"Johnny," I said, "don't ever talk like that again. No way's a good way to die, at your age. I don't want to hear you ever make a remark like that again."

"Okay, Pete," he said. "I'm sorry. I'm kind of hopped up. You know I didn't mean it. I forgot myself."

I saw Eddie and Al Kovatch and Clem Yurner and all the others, and put a hand on the kitchen table.

"Hey, Pete, you sick? What's the matter, Pete?"

His face came into focus. "Ate too fast," I said. "I never did learn to

eat slow. I'd better start learning. Get me the bottle, will you, Johnny? It's upstairs, in the desk."

"Aw, Pete—"

"All right," I said. "I'm better, anyway. Get me a glass of water."

He brought it, well water, cold and fresh.

"You're no spring chicken, Pete. You've got to watch yourself."

Thirty, I was, but to him I must have seemed ready for the fox farm. His old, old brother, and he was probably figuring to take over the management, from here in.

It was a hot afternoon, no clouds, the sun boiling. I can still smell the burning oil, and see the stands fill, and see Johnny, walking around like a big, big man.

I can almost taste the dust and feel the sun, right now.

Dole Maling grinning, and he said to me: "It's a good thing you've only got one iron. He'd run you right into the ground, if you had two cars."

"Huh," I said. "I've won a few, in my time. And not all of them at Jefferson."

"So have I," Dole said. "We'll see how I do today."

Then the opener, the ten-mile, and I said to Johnny: "You be damned careful, boy. Use your head as much as your foot."

"I'll be as careful as it takes to win," he answered. "Don't worry about me, Pete."

A man he was, now, serious and no "hey." Out with the big boys he was playing, on a dusty mile oval before all the farmers. Well, there were some good boys and some good heaps in that opener.

At the start, they were in it, at the green flag. They never got as close, after that, as they'd been at the flag.

On the first turn, Johnny took over the lead, and from there on, he was gone. He put daylight between that black sweetheart and the rest, and the daylight grew and grew.

Too fast for this track, too fast for this race, too fast for this crowd. Was the kid crazy? In the stands, a woman fainted, though it could have been the heat.

Dole wasn't in it. Dole stood next to me, and said: "What a man. What a wheeler."

"Where'd he learn?" I said. "He never drove in anything but those hot-rod races. And they can't wheel like that, can they?"

"You should see 'em," Dole Maling said. "I have. Just once. That was too much. They're crazy—and good."

That black job streaking, throwing dust all over the county, the stands up, and what was the kid trying to prove? He had a half lap lead, with two laps to go, and what did he need? He was nuts.

But I knew. Speed, he needed, and the burn of the wind and the smell of oil. And control of a sixteen-valve, four-cylinder, double-overhead-cam dream buggy that had been engineered by a genius. That's what he needed, and all he ever wanted. And what else is there?

Those weren't muggs, out there, chasing Johnny. One of them was ranked third in the Association. One of them was going to win, at the brickyard, next Decoration Day.

They weren't in *his* class. Hell, they weren't even in his world.

What is it? Guts, touch, talent? What is it, that makes the great ones? Maybe God makes them, and places them here and there, for people to look up to.

But you can tell em, early. In a ring you can spot 'em, on a track. Maybe even in a bank, for all I know. Some guys just got it, and Johnny was one.

His first regulation race, and he won it by three-quarters of a lap, and came in grinning and already dirty.

"How'd I look, Pete?"

"Terrific," I said. "I'll have to get used to handling a wrench."

"You're no slouch, Pete," he said. "We can take turns."

"Thank you," I said. "Why so fast, when you didn't need it? What's to be gained by that?"

"You know why," he said. "I don't have to tell *you*."

"It's your neck," I said. "I can't worry about you all your life. It's your neck. You're a big boy now, Johnny."

He won the fifteen. He won the twenty-five. He would have won the others too, but he wasn't in them.

And when he came in, after the twenty-five, I got the chills, just looking at him. He was too much. He was too hot and too fast and too good for this track, for this game, for this world.

I didn't have a crystal ball, but looking at him, I got scared again and crazy.

"Johnny," I said, "you be careful. You don't have to be that good. All you have to do is win. That ridge up there is just waiting for guys who crowd their luck. It's always up there, waiting, no matter how damned good you are. Don't *ever* forget that, Johnny."

"Okay, Pete," he said. "But I wish you wouldn't worry so much. I can take care of myself. But, okay, Pete."

Like it was yesterday, I can remember it, every word and smell and taste and thought and emotion. And how many yesterdays have there been since that big day, that biggest day?

Too many, and I can still hear Dole saying: "Only remember this, Pete, we *all* love him."

Well, if you do, pray for him. Because he died for you and for me, for all of us, he died; and if you've got a God, pray for Johnny. Get on your knees, damn you.

It wasn't the ridge that got him. Not out in that good American dust, he didn't die.

I got the telegram this morning.

In Korea, he died.

# Sahara Duty

**Eight survivors of a post-war Camel Corps outfit carry the battle to their old enemy, the Senussi.**

by ROBERT CARSE

THERE were eight of them left, and now they marched at a sort of slow shuffle. Benoit, the captain, was ahead. It was he who discovered the track the Senussi had made in the rocky waste of the desert they traversed. He knelt down to examine the marks, then called: "Come and take a look at this, Tagliore."

The Sergeant crouched his stocky body and despite the intensity of the heat touched the indentations in the sand between the rocks where the Senussi camels had passed. His face was without expression as he glanced at Benoit; he spoke in a flat voice, still holding back the desire to show his dislike of the other man.

"It's Senussi sign all right. But it don't mean anything to us except that lot got into the Ahaggar and out again."

The six troopers had come up, stood wordless behind Tagliore. They were men of the Chaamba tribe, veterans whose bearded faces were bleak with years of Saharan service. He was gratified by their silence, aware that they were ready to let him handle the Captain.

"You know the orders," Benoit said hoarsely. "Headquarters told us to intercept the Senussi at any cost, keep them from going into the Ahaggar. We failed badly at Takoural. But this gives us another chance at them. They must be heading for the Enezrift wells to water and rest their animals. It's not far from here, a few hours march on foot even for us. We can come on them in the night; and if we win there'll be plenty of food and water, camels for us to ride back to the post."

"Listen to him," Tagliore said, his restraint gone. "We've been marching like this for almost a week. Yet he'd take eight men against fifty. Keep the bouquet, Captain. We can't smell it."

Benoit stood very still, although a flush of color rose under the stubble on the lean jaws. "The guy's a glory-grabber," Tagliore told himself. "He wouldn't hold his rank if he hadn't served in the Resistance. He does one tour of desert duty, and then he's assigned back to staff work in France. But he knows our tradition—no Camel Corps officer can start an action without asking the men about it first. And at Takoural we lost thirty-two men

from an outfit of forty. We don't want any part of him."

"What do you say?" Benoit asked abruptly of the troopers. "Do we go and meet our enemy?"

"I'll answer for them," Tagliore said. "I'm second in command here, and I've served with them for years. No, we don't."

"But the Senussi won't be looking for us this time," Benoit said. "Once we've cut loose some of their animals—"

"Ah, stop the noise!" Tagliore said and swung to make a gesture to the troopers. He indicated the route of march toward the post. "Let's get started," he told them in their dialect.

"You'd better listen to me, Sergeant," Benoit said sharply. "You're behaving like a deserter."

"To hell with you!" Tagliore said. But he turned around.

"I understand," Benoit said, "that you used to serve in the Legion."

*Watch out,* Tagliore thought swiftly. *Remember that at Takoural the guy was smart enough to keep the crossfire on the Senussi. So figure him close. He's out to pull some trick on you.*

"Sure, I was in the Legion," Tagliore said. He narrowly watched the Captain. "But what are you trying to prove?"

"You've held me from explaining to the men what I think should be done. Because in this outfit a man can argue with an officer about an action, you take advantage of me. But in the Legion, if an officer and a non-com have a difference they can't settle, it's sometimes worked out man to man. I talk to you as an old Legionnaire."

Tagliore's laughter was rapid, rough. "You're a bright boy," he said. "You've heard about all the tricks. Don't try to pick a fight with me, though. That won't get you out of your trouble. Tagliore will knock your head in. You won't even be able to write the Takoural report for headquarters."

"I doubt you." Benoit had taken a short forward step. His blistered fingers unbuckled his belt, and the holstered revolver fell with a dull sound. "You act as if you're afraid of the Senussi, Sergeant, and afraid of me."

TAGLIORE was laughing once more, but he saw that the troopers' eyes glistened and that their sun-blackened lips were pulled back in fierce anticipation. His pride was keenly stung, and the rage was a hot flood he controlled only with difficulty. *No man can call you a coward,* he thought. *First off, not this glory-grabber. Don't go in with him, though. Hang onto yourself. He wants you to fight, so he'll have it on the record.*

"Did you leave the Legion because you were scared?" Benoit said. "Did you think you'd find things easier in the Saharan companies? Speak up, Sergeant."

"I'll speak up," Tagliore said, and then control was lost to him. He advanced in a lithe rush. His great shoulders were stooped, and he was bent to strike a fist blow, lash out with the *savate* kick. He used the combination twice in succession, sent Benoit reeling sidewise.

But Benoit caught him in mid-rush the next time, hurled him backward. Then for a moment they both rested panting, glaring into each other's eyes. This wouldn't be a short fight, they recognized, and stripped off their képis, their burnouses and the clothing beneath, went back bare to the waist under the slant of the late afternoon sun.

REPEATEDLY Benoit was knocked down, and lay with the rocks searing his hands. He was so groggy that when he rose he barely felt the other's blows. *But keep going,* he told himself. *You must. It's the only way. Unless you get this tough old ape involved enough, he'll never do it, and it all depends on him. Without Tagliore, the thing is hopeless. . . .*

"Get up." That was Tagliore. The Sergeant stood over him, and he was lying chest-down now upon the rocks. "Get up or tell me that you're done."

"Not you," Benoit muttered. He rose staggering and blindly swinging. A blow from Tagliore thrashed him almost to his knees. His foot dragged across a rock, and he stumbled. Then, without intention, his head butted through Tagliore's arms, and the top of his skull banged the Sergeant squarely in the face.

Tagliore pranced, screaming with pain. He fingered his nose, spat out broken teeth. "You slob," he said. "For that—"

But two of the troopers were moving in between them. They were Mahol and another, younger man, Gharaik.

Tagliore, in his fury and pain, saw them but dimly; he summoned the memory, though, that in the action at Takoural those men's lives had been saved by the Captain. They were showing their allegiance to Benoit. Benoit would have them with him when he went back to the Senussi.

"Stop, you," Mahol said to Tagliore. His hand was on the poniard in the belt below his crossed bandoliers. "The Captain should be let alone. He has serious work to do."

"All right," Tagliore said. He was moved by the fact that at Takoural the trooper had fought very well. *You're not the kind to forget,* he thought. *Mahol's got his personal reasons for liking the Captain. If he wants to go with Benoit, let him, and let Gharaik too. You can't keep them back when they get stupid enough to think of the guy as a friend instead of a soldier.*

Tagliore sat down on a rock, fingered the bones of his nose and listened to what Gharaik told the Captain. "We'll go with you to the Senussi," Gharaik said. "We're not the sons of sick dogs."

A renewal of rage stirred in Tagliore and quickly subsided. *That was only talk. Wait until they meet up with the Senussi tonight. Gharaik will learn fast who should be called the names. Take it easy. You and the sensible guys have still got to make the rest of the march back to the post. Five days already from Takoural, and another four at least to go. Keep your eye on the water sack.*

Mahol held the goatskin sack, had just given Benoit a drink. The Captain wiped his hand along his puffed lips, glanced curiously at Tagliore. "When my men have had a drink," he said, "you can take the sack. You can also have the rations. We won't need them."

"All you'll need," Tagliore said, "is a place to hide your bones from the jackals." But his nose had begun to swell badly, and because of it and his smashed teeth, his voice had a peculiar thin whistling quality. He was sorry he had spoken; the four troopers who had kept silent were murmuring. He stared at them and back at Benoit. *You can't be so fast with the guy,* he thought. *Give him more of a chance.*

"If you want," he said, carefully checking the whistling note, "you can march to the post with us. Because you're crazy don't mean you and the two fellows have to die."

"Get out," Benoit said in a soft voice. "Get on your way. I once thought you were a real soldier, Tagliore."

Tagliore made a shrugging gesture. "You sure know a lot of talk," he said. He tapped his képi down, set his burnous about his shoulders. Then he pointed to the water sack and the bag of rations. The group of four troopers who had chosen to be his companions picked them up, moved south after him. Their shadows were a long mauve sprawl in the flare of the sunset as they stopped on the next ridge. The troopers looked back one by one, and finally Tagliore turned his head.

BENOIT led the way north to the Senussi. He walked with a slight stagger. But Mahol and Gharaik closely followed him. They strode almost exactly in the marks his broad-soled sandals made. Against the enormous expanse of the desert, their fig-

ures had the sudden appearance of being very small.

"Let's march," Tagliore told his troopers. He stood motionless, though, until they had passed him. They kept looking back covertly to the north, he noticed.

The moon was on the horizon before Tagliore called a halt. He sat with his burnous pulled tight, for it had become very cold and the great *bahri* wind had started to blow. The troopers squatted back to back for warmth, talking very little and then about the Captain, Mahol and Gharaik. They wondered what luck the three would have tonight.

Tagliore was tempted to curse the troopers, tell them to keep silent. They had enough troubles of their own. He and the rest of them here were in no shape to finish the march on foot to the post. There was a good chance that instead of reaching it they might die of hunger and thirst.

FROM habit, Tagliore put a hand inside his leather shoulder-bag for a cigarette. He felt a keen need for the taste of the coarse black tobacco. But only a few loose grains were left. He recalled that he had smoked the last cigarette several days ago. The lack of tobacco returned him to violent resentment of Benoit.

*Nobody has given you just one tour of desert duty,* he thought bitterly. *You've been in the Sahara for twenty-four years. But even before that you never had any luck. You're the son of a poor, damn' farmer who had more children than goats. It had to be, too, that you were forced to kill a guy in a fight or be killed. Then the Legion, then this outfit. . . .*

His brooding thought carried him back through the early years of his life in Corsica. He was again in that little wine-shop on the dusty road to Ajaccio, outside the donkey and the two-wheeled cart that drew a cask of his father's olive oil to market. Across the table from him was man of another family which intermittently had held *vendetta* with his own. It meant nothing to him; coming in from the road, he had offered to buy the man a cup of wine. But the answer was a stinging crack on the jaw. Wine slopped on the table; the knife was pulled.

He tried to get to the door, protect himself, escape. The other man was older, known as a savage fighter and a killer. His knife was the famous long stiletto and the sunlight took the blade as he veered into the doorway. "Stay, Tagliore," he said. "Give yourself a moment of peace so you can say your prayers."

Then their bodies locked and they strained to find the advantage. But the other struck first with the knife.

*Illustrated by Ray Houlihan*

*Keep going, Benoit told himself. It's the only way.*

The blade glanced downward from the shoulder bone, tearing flesh in Tagliore's chest. The agony and the fear he already felt gave Tagliore exceptional strength. He lifted the man, flung him heavily up against the cart side. That broke the other's spine; he swerved and fell dead in the dust of the road while Tagliore stared unbelievingly at him.

The desert cold through the folds of his burnous brought Tagliore to the present. He heard the low, slow voices of the troopers, was aware that they still spoke about the men who had gone after the Senussi. But he put his hand inside his clothing, slid it over the roughness of the old scar along his shoulder.

A strip from the petticoat of the wineshop-keeper's wife had gone to bandage that. Then for days he had lain hidden in barns and lofts until his family could arrange to get him aboard a ship bound for Tangier. He'd almost died of starvation in Tangier; then, his shoulder better, he worked his way down the coast to a town where they accepted recruits for the Foreign Legion.

But during his years in the Legion he had been gravely worried. Letters from his family at home told him that the police hadn't yet given up the case. He might be discovered, taken back for trial. So at the end of his enlistment he had talked with a Camel Corps officer whom he knew,

and had asked to be given duty in the deep desert.

It had been long now, he thought, and the affair was dropped for good by the police. He'd saved his pay and through his sisters he had been in touch with a neighbor girl who had become a widow. They had exchanged photographs, carefully written letters. In another few months, he would be able to leave the desert, go home and marry. He knew the exact corner of the square in Ajaccio where his café was to be, and he had the name for it —The Golden Camel. No damn' glory-grabber was going to pull him into a crazy raid against the Senussi right at the end of his time.

The troopers were talking loud enough for him to hear each word. He rose and walked over to them. "What's the matter?" he said. "You sorry you aren't stupid, too?"

They stared sharply up at him, their eyes the color of the rifle steel in the moonlight. "The Senussi ride fine animals, Sergeant," the oldest man said. "They must have also taken the best beasts the Tuareg had in the Ahaggar pastures."

LIFTING the képi from his bald skull, Tagliore let the breeze sweep over the sweaty crown. He was badly disturbed by what he knew the trooper had left unsaid. "Go back," he grunted in response, "and you get there when the moon is high. The Senussi would pick you off like ripe millet."

He went to where he had been before, sat with his back to the troopers. *Get it straight,* he told himself. *That glory-grabber served in the Resistance, and the Resistance guys were supposed to be very good on night raiding jobs.* Benoit might bring it off after all. And if he did. . . . Tagliore cursed and scratched the crown of his head.

The orders for the detachment to intercept the Senussi had been given because headquarters was worried about the consequences of an attack upon the Ahaggar. The Tuareg who lived there had been at peace for years, given up their famous tradition as Saharan warriors. But from the signs made by the Senussi on their way north, a number of Tuareg men had been captured as well as animals. The Senussi would sell those men into slavery after the column had recrossed the border into Libya. That and the Takoural defeat would create serious trouble through all of the desert. A great success was needed to restore Camel Corps prestige.

No matter what he thought of the man, Tagliore admitted, he wasn't capable of fully blaming Benoit for the defeat. Benoit had simply obeyed orders, sent his fatigued men and animals against an enemy which was alert, prepared. Perhaps Benoit

## THE MARKED BULLET

**THE Algerian chieftains, regally attired in their flowing garments, watched the man on the stage before them with unconcealed skepticism.**

**The man made some goldfish disappear and a rabbit appear from seemingly out of nowhere. Still the Arabians remained stanchly unimpressed. It was only when the magician, Robert Houdin, produced a cannonball out of a borrowed hat that there was a flicker of interest. But it quickly died down.**

**It looked as if Robert Houdin, so far as is known the only professional trickster ever to be dignified with a diplomatic appointment, had failed in his mission.**

**He had been sent by the French Government to show the restless Algerian leaders that the "white man's magic" was more powerful than their own and that they should be respectful and obedient to French rule.**

**The year was 1899 and the Algerians were showing marked signs of rebelliousness. The French, whose hands were full of other pressing problems, including a possible conflict with Britain over Egyptian matters, were most anxious to keep Algeria in line without resort to arms.**

**But the Algerian natives were beginning to lose their awe and therefore their respect for French dominance. If Houdin, the remarkable magician who had so fascinated his French audiences, only could restore this feeling of awesomeness—**

**It appeared, however, that his endeavors in sorcery were going for naught. But he had one more thing to bring to the attention of the Arabs.**

**"You know," he said, "I can let you people shoot me and still it will not kill me or even have any ill effect upon me."**

**A chortle of disbelief swept through the audience.**

**"It is true," said Houdin, "I can let one of you stand only a few feet away from me and shoot me. But, instead of its doing any harm, I shall merely catch the bullet. Then I shall fire the bullet at the one who has shot at me and, without hitting him, I shall draw blood."**

**A young Arab chieftain sprang up. "I am an excellent marksman," he said. "I should like to be the one to shoot you."**

**The chieftains watched with great interest as the young Arab climbed upon the stage. He was well known as a good shot and a fierce hunter.**

**Houdin handed him a pistol. The chieftain looked it over; it was a good solid pistol. He nodded his approval.**

**Then the magician handed him a bullet. It had a red mark on it. "I have marked it," Houdin explained, "so that you will recognize it when you see it again."**

**The Arab dropped powder into the gun, then rammed the bullet into the weapon.**

**He was ready. So was Houdin. Standing only fifteen paces away and aiming the pistol squarely at the magician, the Arab pulled the trigger. There was the sound of the shot and there was smoke.**

**But Houdin was still standing there. A calm smile was on his face—and something was between his teeth: It was a bullet with a red mark on it!**

**He took the bullet out of his mouth and rammed it into a pistol. Then he fired over the Arab's head. It hit the wall—and a wet spot, the color of blood, showed itself on the wall.**

**The Arab reached up and touched the spot with a finger; then he put the finger to his mouth. It was blood, all right!**

**WHAT happened was that during the night Houdin had melted some wax, darkened it to make it look like lead and ran it into a bullet-mold. When the Arab rammed this bullet into the pistol, it had become crushed into powder. No missile had actually come out of the gun.**

**The similarly marked bullet that came from Houdin's mouth was one which he had fashioned in a like manner, but he was careful not to ram it so hard that it would dissolve in the pistol. Also he had made it hollow and filled the space with some blood of his.**

**A simple enough explanation, perhaps, when you read it—but the Arabs beheld it with unabashed wonder; and Houdin, professional charlatan and hoodwinker, had saved the day for the French Government.**

***—by HAROLD HELFER***

should have stayed off, taken more time to intercept. The Senussi had come right in, though, forming the immemorial circle, increasing their fire before they charged. Benoit had built the barricade of saddles and packs, then served the heavy machine-gun until the Senussi charge was broken. The Senussi had ridden off at last, content to leave eight men alive when they could count as dead all of their enemy's animals.

Tagliore gave up scratching his skull. He gently touched his nose. *Go back to the post with this and you'll get asked plenty of questions. Then maybe Benoit comes in on some fine big beast with Mahol and Gharaik behind him leading a string of them. You'd have to get transferred to hell away before your time was done. Your service record. . . . Ah, cut it out, Tagliore. You're being stupid now. What's got you is your pride. You don't want to march back north and join that guy.*

But he was on his feet, striding over to the troopers. He gave the group an oblique and almost anxious glance. "I guess I was pretty quick before," he said. "I pulled you out and didn't let you listen to the Captain. The job he's picked is very tough. Still, it could be worked if it was handled right."

"A long time ago," the spokesman for the troopers said, "you taught me that a man can't live forever. We're willing to join the Captain if you'll go with us."

"Here," Tagliore said hoarsely, amazed by the degree of his emotion. He lifted up the water sack and the bag that held the rations. "Once this is finished, no man can change around and head back to the post."

They drank the water sip by sip as they ate the morsels of food Tagliore shared out to them. He savored his own, thinking grimly of the hours to come and the very small chance of victory. "All right," he said in a rough voice. "Let's go."

THE moon was radiant as they traversed north. The wind flipped and rippled sand before it, and the moonlight made of the desert a shimmering sea. Rocky ridges stood forth as reefs and with the cresting fall and sweep and fall again of the sand, shadows took the formations of waves. Close to the horizon, cirrus clouds lay in narrow banks that resembled sails. Tagliore remembered the fishing fleet inward-bound off his home coast, and he smelled the salt of the sea, then the scent of mimosa, of orange trees in blossom returned to him. Instead of the sandy wind, the soft breeze of Corsican spring was against his face, and the weight of his rifle was a girl he had once carried tight-embraced.

"Stop the stupid stuff," he said beneath his breath. "You got to do this job right."

He halted, his arms wide in a signal to the others. There were three figures ahead in the moonlight. He made out Mahol and Gharaik. The third man, the one who lay prostrate, was Benoit.

A vast surge of relief and restored pride possessed Tagliore.

Then he felt ashamed of himself. *You're like a schoolboy,* he thought. *All this means is that he'll have to be carried. You can't leave him here.*

The two troopers were surly, suspicious. They refused to let him near the Captain when he and the others advanced. He pushed past them without word and knelt down beside the Captain.

BENOIT was conscious enough to grimace at Tagliore. *It's going as you hoped it would,* he thought. *You've got to the old-timer's pride.* Now for a time at least you can relax. But as the darkness of exhaustion reached in, he muttered, "What's brought you here? The hope of loot?"

Tagliore disregarded that. He was deeply pleased to take care of the Captain.

"No chatter," he ordered. "Save your strength. We'll be up with the Senussi in another hour." He beckoned Mahol forward. "Hold him while I get off the tunic."

He unbuttoned Benoit's tunic, opened the garment out and slid rifle barrels through the sleeves. Then he knotted his own burnouse over it, made a sort of stretcher. "You ride this," he told Benoit, hard-voiced, "until you ride a Senussi camel." He turned then to call a pair of men to carry the Captain, moved rapidly forth alone beyond the little column. He didn't want any more talk with Benoit, and he didn't want the others to see how tired he was. Every couple of steps, he stumbled, and he was shivering so with cold and fatigue that his nose severely pained him.

But the terrain ahead was different, he realized. The waste of loose rocks gave way to a low limestone plateau and at the far edge of that in a small, wind-sheltered valley were the Enezrift wells. They had been used for centuries, and yet they were distant from any regular caravan route and rarely visited. The Senussi sheikh had chosen his course with care; here he could get all the water he needed, then head on straight to the Libyan border. It was also easy to have scouts protect the valley while the animals were watered and the captives got a bit of rest.

Tagliore signaled to the men behind him. He waited to make sure that they halted, took cover among the rocks. Then he went forward crouched down and slowly from patch to patch of shadow. Senussi sentries were spaced all along the cliff at intervals of about a dozen yards. He found them by the flapping of their wind-flattened robes, their sour smell. They sat hunched cross-legged, their Italian rifles kept low out of the moonlight.

*"You're not going to jump the sentries alone?"*

It wouldn't be a very big job to get past them, he decided. The real job was how to get down the cliff, because from the sounds the Senussi had their picket-line right at the entrance of the valley and that certainly was well guarded. He was prone, crawling slowly on his belly toward the cliff edge when he heard the new sound. It was dim, small and in back of him; he whirled with the rifle at his shoulder.

Benoit crept slowly through the shadow. He made a palm-up signal with his hand to Tagliore. Then he came on slightly faster, lay panting beside the other man. "I thought for

a minute," he whispered, "that you were going to get us both shot."

"Who the hell let you out?" Tagliore said.

"You forget," Benoit said, "that I still hold Captain's rank. The others respect it even if you don't." He grinned as he spoke, then his face tightened and he gestured at the cliff edge. "Let's get over there. I have an idea about how this should be done. Do you mind?"

"Sure, I mind!" Tagliore said. But he crawled alongside him and he was forced to notice that Benoit went without noise, was skillful, highly trained in each motion he made.

They came through the shadow pattern to the rear of a ledge of rock, lay motionless there until they could tell they were unseen, unheard. Then they rose up a bit and gazed into the valley.

Below, the moonlight was broken by the cliff. Shadow extended over most of the valley. But at least a hundred animals nickered and snapped at the picket ropes along the northern, open side. Small fires of dung were burning out where the Senussi had camped in the center. That was close to the wells where the huge limestone slabs had been hauled back. Men were gathered at the wells. They were the Tuareg prisoners in their long, blue robes and they moved with awkward steps. Man was shackled to man with heavy leg-irons in the ancient slave style. Senussi warriors guarded them, prodded them with rifle butts and camel sticks. The Tuareg were being driven to fill the captors' water-sacks.

"Those are a proud lot," Benoit said. "They'd be a big help to us if we could get them free. Before you and the other men rejoined me, I planned to make an attempt to reach them. We did a good deal of that sort of thing with prisoners in the Resistance and it often worked. It was the only way I could figure that we might have a chance here."

"So! You and your two guys wouldn't have gone far." Tagliore was studying the entrance to the valley. "But whether we can use the Tuareg or not, the first job is to get at the camels."

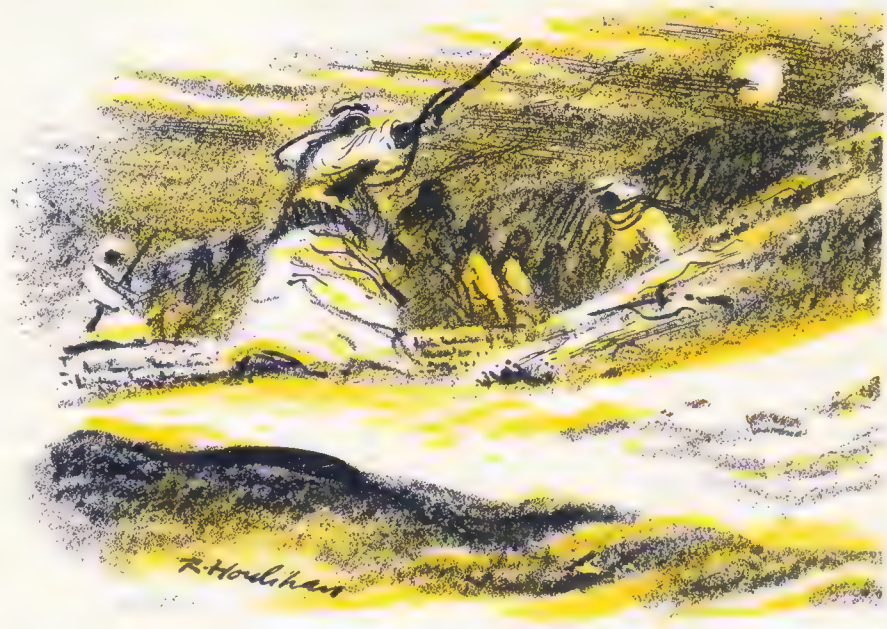
"How would you do it?" Benoit said. There was no mockery or antagonism behind the question, Tagliore sensed. Benoit was playing square, and he had respect for the man's plan about the Tuareg. But some of Tagliore's feeling of resentment remained. His pride made him answer, "You have to know the desert well to understand. Stay still and I'll be back. I'll show you."

"You're not going to jump the sentries alone?" Benoit said swiftly.

"Only one," Tagliore said. "The skinny type over here to the right."

He moved in at the Senussi warrior with the utmost of his skill. A tremendous source of hidden, reserve energy had given him power. He was aware that Benoit would be critical of the smallest mistake. But tonight there weren't going to be any mistakes. This was Tagliore's night.

The Senussi heard him in the final instant, swung to bring up his rifle, began to yell. But Tagliore's huge hands already locked the throat cords; he closed upon them until a spasmodic twitching took the body and then death came. He loosened his hands and propped the body upright. The turban had slipped and he arranged that, placed the rifle as it had been before. Then he went on to a flat area of rock where all day the sun beat.




He had the warrior's camel stick and a good idea of where a snake might be. The snake was coiled under a stone that still kept some of the sun's heat. It was sluggish, and he pinned it down with the stick, flopped it into his leather shoulder bag, securely shut the flap. Later on down in the valley, the snake would be worth plenty of men. . . .

Benoit nodded at him in open admiration when he returned. "You take your snake," he said, "and go to the camel lines. The other men and I will have to handle the Tuareg. Right?"

"Right," Tagliore said. "I'll go back now and muster the outfit. We can go down the cliff past where I got the sentry."

He started to crawl out then to gather the men, but Benoit restrained him. Benoit put a hand lightly on his arm. "I guess you know now, Sergeant," he said, "that you can trust me. I'll hold the Senussi until after you've reached the camel line. Then we'll go in to free the prisoners. We should meet you out at the end of the valley."

"You should," Tagliore said. He allowed himself a smile. "A lot of those Senussi are going to be chasing camels. That's what I'll tell our guys. Later, you can tell them anything you want."

It was impossible to be absolutely soundless as they descended the cliff. The soft limestone crumbled under their weight and pebbles dropped rattling. Tagliore slipped once and barely caught hold, and in helping him Mahol knocked his Lebel butt plate against the stones with a loud crack. But the velocity of the wind had greatly increased; it brought a pelting flurry of sand through the valley. The Senussi moved head-down as they secured the water sacks, checked the camel gear, the saddles, and neither looked up or seemed to hear.

*This is your night,* Tagliore told himself again. He was down on the valley floor in a deep pocket of shadow, bent waiting for the rest. He tried the action of his rifle, put his hand upon the shoulder bag to feel the uneasy stirring of the snake. Then he gazed out and chose the course he must follow to reach the camels. A lot of it was exposed. *You're taking a big chance, Tagliore, the hell of a big chance. But you can't go back. You've got to go ahead. Benoit and the other guys are ready.*

He shook hands with Benoit, a gesture he hadn't performed in years. Benoit's grip was firm; he calmly indicated to Tagliore the somber column of the Tuareg still formed at the wells.

*Tagliore thought the camel's scream had punctured his eardrums. But he seized the head harness, clung to it.*

"We'll take care of them," Benoit whispered. "Good luck."

"Sure," Tagliore said and stepped out from the cliff shadow. He walked for a few paces; then he saw the Senussi who stared at him, heard their shouts. He began to run. The Senussi fired a rapid volley, but he had calculated right; the camels were behind him and the shots were pulled high. He took the bag from his shoulder, grasped it so that it could be opened at once.

The camels stood trembling, their slender necks high-arched, the pendulous lips drawn wrinkled for the whinnying bellows of fright. They reared at the woven picket ropes, frantic to get loose. Then, close in front of the glancing thrash of hoofs, Tagliore cast the snake up onto the back of a cream-colored beast.

Tagliore had the thought that the camel's scream punctured his eardrums. The hoofs flicked past his head in motions too swift for vision to register. But the violence of the beast had broken the picket rope and he seized the head harness, clung to it. The camel reared, reared once more, and the blunt yellow teeth grazed at him in futile frenzy. Then the beast swept from the picket line, got away out of the confused mass of the other animals. It went wildly galloping and screaming toward the desert. Behind him, Tagliore heard very faintly the reports of a volley. *Benoit,* he thought, through the anguish of his straining arms. *The guy's made the jump for the Tuareg.*

Benoit knelt holding his rifle by the stock small. He watched out in the valley the mad whirl of the picket line beasts. One was clear, rushed forth at the gallop into the desert. A man, Tagliore, clung to the head harness of that and the others stampeded after it. Senussi pursued the camels; they yelled warning at their sentries beyond.

*Now it's become your turn,* Benoit thought. *You've got Tagliore to take his part.* He motioned to the troopers and the eyes in the beard-dark faces filled with a strange shine. He darted forward silently, but the troopers made guttural little cries as they followed him.

The warriors who guarded the Tuareg gazed toward the desert. Some were tucking their robes up into their belts to sprint across the valley. Benoit and the troopers fired into them at almost point-blank range. Then the Tuareg fell upon the warriors who remained.

Benoit was near hysteria from exhaustion. He shouted out in horror for the Tuareg to stop. They had no mercy and no fear. A convulsion of hatred gripped them and they killed with the leg-irons they had just torn loose, fragments of slabs from the wells, their bare hands.

But slowly they took up the weapons dropped by the Senussi. Leaders formed groups; they listened quivering with the passion of their vengeance as Benoit explained what should be done. The groups went along the valley. Each time the Senussi made an effort to gather together, they were surrounded, held under a steady fire.

Tagliore met Benoit after dawn. He came in from the desert bringing Benoit a tall Senussi camel. "Ride over," he said, "and tell the Tuareg it's finished. No more than fourteen or fifteen of those guys found mounts and could ride away."

The Tuareg stood taut as the battle fever passed from them. Then they thanked Benoit in their formal fashion. He shook his head and pointed to Tagliore. "There is the man to be thanked. He made it possible. When you sing the new songs in your tents, name him—Tagliore."

It was repeated over and over by the Tuareg so that they would have it right. They turned their animals afterward, starting south with the Senussi loot to the highlands of the Ahaggar. Benoit rode to where Tagliore sprawled. "I meant what I told them," he said.

"Ah, stop the noise!" Tagliore said. "Let's get the outfit on the way to the post. I want some guy to take a photograph of me with my nose like this."

"Why?" Benoit said, staring.

Tagliore shrugged. "I'll need it for the café in Ajaccio. If I don't have the photograph, the customers won't believe me about what happened last night."

"Maybe not," Benoit said, and smiled with him. "Maybe not."

# TIME EXPOSURE

NO, ma'am, I'm not being unreasonable. That is, I don't mean to be. I *am* a little impatient, yes. After all, I've been haunting outer offices for the past three weeks now, trying to find someone with the authority to—

Yes ma'am, I *know* it's not easy to get a passport nowadays. But I've got to have one. Got to! If you'll just give me five minutes with your boss—

Business? I've already stated my business to half the private secretaries in Washington, and it never does the least— Oh, all right—if that's the way it's got to be. But I'm wasting my time and yours. You won't believe me. Nobody does. You'd have to know Joe Dorry to—

Joe Dorry. My partner. Or erstwhile partner. If I can just get to see him, I can straighten things out in jig time. He's confused, that's all. You see, he didn't realize Jean and I—

From the beginning? Well, okay. But you've got to go back a full year. To the day when Joe Dorry first entered my life—and my hair.

My title was Chief Photographer, which meant that I was sole dictator, drudge and janitor of the oversized stall shower the *Times-News* fatuously calls a darkroom. I had just finished making a layout for the Sunday society section when the Managing Editor buzzed me to his lair.

"Gray," he growled, "meet Mr. Joseph Dorry."

I swapped squeezes with the lanky, wide-eyed youngster standing beside the desk, and queried the Old Man with a hoisted brow.

"Your new assistant," he added, "if you want him."

This was good news. I had been pleading vainly for a relief man for the past two years.

"Does Sears want Roebuck?" I chortled. "Does roast beef want Yorkshire pudding? Welcome to Headache Hall, Dorry. Got your equipment with you?"

Dorry nodded at a scuffed case.

"Then what are we waiting for?" I demanded. "Leave us go hence and make like a photographic staff. Yoicks, view halloo, not to mention tally-ho!"

Together we left the office.

Outside, Joe Dorry said hesitantly; "There's one thing I maybe ought to tell you, Mr. Gray—"

"Ted."

"There's one thing I ought to tell you, Mr. Ted. I haven't had any previous experience in this field. I'm not a trained news photographer, like you."

"Few," I told him modestly, "are. But you'll learn. And there's no time like the present to begin your training." I glanced at my watch. "Eleven-thirty. Do you know the City Auditorium?"

"That big building over by the railroad station?"

"Right. That edifice is at the moment hideously alive with yips, yaps and yelps as a bevy of bleating beldames parade their perfumed pooches around the arena. Today is the final day of the annual Dog Show. How about gallivanting over there and getting a few snaps of, not from, the winner?"

"Gosh," gulped Dorry, "can I *really?* That would be wonderful, Mr. Ted. I love dogs."

I HANDED him my press pass.

"Just get the Best of Show. Never mind the others. And be back no later than twelve-thirty. We put the sheet to bed at two-forty-five."

"Oh, I'll be back before that," he said excitedly. "I'll hurry, Mr. Ted. I'll hurry real fast."

"Maybe *you* will. But how about the judges? Here's an idea, Dorry. If the decision is delayed, get a picture of the Bidawee Kennels Cairn, Bonny Dundee o' Lochinvar. He's favored to win, so we'll have some protection."

"Don't worry. I'll bring back the winner's picture," Dorry pledged. "It sure is nice of you to give me this break, Mr. Ted. I certainly do appreciate it."

*"Pete, do you want to buy some dog meat?"*

A LIGHT-HEARTED JOURNEY INTO THE PARLOUS BOURNE OF THE FOURTH DIMENSION.

# by NELSON BOND

*Illustrated by* STUART HAY

*—"The managing editor buzzed me—"*

"Down, Dorry!" I said absently. I patted his head, resisted an impulse to scratch behind his ears, and unleashed him. He scampered happily away, his coattail wagging behind him, and I plunged myself into the serious problem of picking a winner in the fourth at Pimlico. It sure was wonderful, I thought, finally to have an assistant to take the unimportant details off my hands.

Twenty minutes later the door of my cubby flew open and Dorry entered, glowing like an overgrown sunbeam on legs. I stared at him in surprise.

"What's the matter?" I asked. "Run out of film?"

"No sir."

"Then what did you come back for? See here, kid," I reprimanded, "this is no way to handle your first assignment. I told you to get a picture of the dog-show winner."

"I did," said Dorry.

"Huh?"

"I got a swell shot of the winner. That is, I suppose it's swell. They usually are," he finished incomprehensibly.

"You mean," I frowned, "the show is over already?"

"No sir. Not quite. It's still going on. Gosh, it's a wonderful show. They have some beautiful dogs. There was one little dachshund I just *loved*, but the judges—"

"Wait a minute!" I interrupted. "Let me get this straight. The show's not over yet, but you've got a shot of the winner?"

"That's right."

"What," I demanded narrowly, "is the dog's name?"

Dorry's smile faded. His fingers laced and unlaced slowly. He quavered: "Well, I—I don't exactly know—yet."

"You don't *know!*"

"Not yet. But I will in a few minutes. As soon as I—" He paused, gulped, and wrestled film-pack from his bag. "If you'll excuse me, Mr. Ted, I'll develop these pix. Then I'll show you what I mean."

"Okay," I said stonily. "You do that. Help yourself to the hypo, sonny—internally, if you wish. I'll see you when this red mist fades from my eyes."

I stalked into the city-room, stood there brooding for a few minutes, then dialed the Auditorium. The secretary of the Kennel Club barked greeting.

"Pete?" I said. "This is Ted Gray. Judges picked the winner yet?"

"Not quite, Ted. They're still in the ring."

"I figured!" I said grimly. "Pete, do you want to buy some dog meat? About a hundred and forty pounds? On the hoof? Cheap?"

DORRY appeared beside me, flapping a moist print.

"Mr. Ted," he said breathlessly, "here he is. The winner. His name is—"

"Ted?" called Pete from the other end of the wire. "Ted, are you still there?"

"Yes," I said. "Shuddup, you!"

"What? Now, see here, Gray—"

"Not you, Pete—this hunk of mayhem-bait beside me. Go ahead. You were saying—"

"I've got a flash for you. The judges just brought in their decision."

"Bonny?"

"No. A surprise winner. The Best of Show goes to an Irish terrier named Castle of Blarney Brian. Got that?"

"Yes," I said. "Thanks. I'll be over in a minute to get a picture of him. See you, Pete."

I hung up, turned savagely on Dorry.

"Out of my way, buster," I growled. "Thanks to you, I've just barely got time to catch a shot of the winning hydrant-sprinkler before deadline. If you're smart, you'll leave before I get back. It's been nice having you for an assistant—but not too nice."

I started to brush by him, but he clutched my arm.

"But, Mr. Ted, I've *got* the picture. Here! This is Castle of Blarney Brian."

I took the damp oblong with which he was massaging my nose, stared at it dazedly. There was no doubt about it. It was an Irish terrier. I gaped at Dorry.

"Well, I'll be darned!" I mused. "Crooked, eh?"

"I beg your pardon?"

"The show was rigged. Somebody got to the judges. But how did you find out about it?"

Dorry looked horrified.

"Oh, no sir! Nothing like that. The judges were completely honest."

"Then how in blazes did you—" I paused, viewing him with new respect. "I get it. You're a dog expert? You figured Brian to cop the prize?"

Dorry wriggled uncomfortably.

"Not that either, Mr. Ted. As a matter of fact, I don't know the first thing about show dogs. If the selection had been left to me, I would have picked that little dachshund I told you about. She was the *sweetest* little creature—"

"Then how did you know? How?"

"Well, I tried to tell you once before, Mr. Ted. I mean—well, I haven't had much experience as a cameraman, but there are certain things— It's sort of—that is—"

We were getting nowhere. And deadline was close. I had no time to listen to his fumbling explanations.

"Okay," I sighed. "I don't know how you did it, but who am I to argue with results? Label this, sonny, and let's roll it upstairs."

Perhaps I should have guessed the truth right then and there. But I

*In two clicks of a shutter, we were on our way.*

didn't. With a happy ending to the incident, I chalked up Dorry's accomplishment as a lucky guess and proceeded to forget all about it. The light of comprehension did not begin to penetrate the fog-bank of my brain until the next day. That was the day of the big accident.

We had just reported in that afternoon, when there came a screech from the police shortwave radio, announcing a General Fourteen in the midtown area. I didn't even wait for the bawl to rise from the newsroom. The minute I heard it, I was up off my brains and yelling to Dorry.

"That's the emergency call, Joe. Load up and let's get rolling."

He reached for his case and I for mine; I crammed a pocketful of cut film into my jacket, and in two clicks of a shutter we were on our way to the scene of the accident.

It was a mess, all right. There's this grade crossing in our town, right in the heart of the business district. For the past twenty years, thoughtful citizens had been urging that something be done about it—but nothing ever *had* been done, partly because the crossing was so obviously dangerous that no major accident had ever happened there, and mostly because the railroad packs a weighty political punch in our fair city.

Today, however, the law of averages had finally asserted itself. A fast freight had highballed down the main to tangle with the automotive traffic. The solid line of motor-driven vehicles had scattered desperately in all directions, trying to get out of the way. Most of the panicky drivers had succeeded, but one bus had failed. Loaded with passengers, it had matched tonnage with the locomotive —and lost. The result was grisly.

Dorry and I had literally to claw our way through the mob to reach a vantage point; and after I got there, I was sorry I'd made it. I may be a sissy, but I'm allergic to useless slaughter—and that's what this was. Police were trying to hold back the crowd; ambulance crews and rescue squads were working like demons, the air was tortured with mingled shouts, screams and sobs—but why go on? I summarized the situation in my first phrase. It was a mess.

Dorry and I separated. For the next thirty minutes I didn't even know where he was, or what he was doing. I went into action. I got some terrific shots, ghoulish, but newsworthy: A woman finding her husband under one of the blankets that lined the tracks; a man desperately struggling with his remaining sound arm to release from the twisted wreckage of the bus a girl whose need for assistance was long since past. . . . That sort of thing. When I returned to the car, I found Dorry waiting for me. His jowls were as green as my own. Without exchanging a word, we threw ourselves into the crate and raced back to the plant, where we immediately tossed our cargo into the soup. Then, in our first free minutes of a hectic hour, we took time out for a cigarette. We went into the city-room to talk things over with the reporters.

Those who were not hunched over typewriters batting out eyewitness accounts of the tragedy were huddled together in a sober little knot trying to figure out what had happened. There was a considerable amount of disagreement about this.

"It was clearly the bus driver's fault," said Wally Thornton. "He must have rushed the gates after they started down, then got trapped in the traffic snarl."

"That's not the way I got it," denied Chad Osborne. "The witnesses I talked to say the bars didn't start down until the bus was already on the crossing. That makes it the gate-tender's fault and the railroad's responsibility."

"Maybe," said someone else dubiously. "I found witnesses who claim just the opposite."

"In that case," fumed Phil Harrison, "we'll *never* know. This case will drag on in the courts for years, and no one will ever be tagged with the liability."

Dorry cleared his throat, spoke up hesitantly.

"Then it's important to establish whether the gates were down at the time of the accident?"

"Important! It's the key to the whole case!"

"In that case," said Dorry, "I'm glad."

"Glad of what? That you weren't in the bus?"

"That I took that shot," said Dorry cryptically. He turned to me. "Mr. Ted, isn't it about time for our stuff to come out of the developer?"

We went back to the darkroom. Dorry ran the films through the hypo, blew up the negatives and set prints. When he had dipped the prints in a stop bath and washed them, he pulled out a dripping sheet.

"This should settle the question, shouldn't it, Mr. Ted?" he asked quietly.

"Hmm?" I said. "What question?"

"The matter of the gate. You see, it *wasn't* down. It was just starting to descend when the bus—"

"What the hell are you talking about?" I demanded. "You and I didn't even *get* there till after the—after—you and I— Holy sweet baldheaded saints!"

My yammering ended in a stunned ejaculation as the picture's meaning registered on my gray cells. Dorry's shot was of the *locale* we had just left, but not the *scene*. There were differences—important differences. This was no hectic scene of carnage. This shot showed a breaking phalanx of automobiles scuttling out of the way of a looming freight locomotive. Halfway across the grade crossing was the crosstown bus. The picture was so clear that you could see the frozen look of horror on the driver's face as with one futilely gesticulating arm he strove to fend off the impending impact.

Most significant of all, the picture showed that at this moment—which must have been split seconds before the collision—the bars of the grade-crossing gates were only halfway down across the opening!

I CROAKED at Dorry: "Where—where did you get this shot?"

He wriggled.

"At the scene of the accident."

"I know. But *when?* We didn't get there till after it was over. This must have been taken when you and I were still here in the office."

"No," said Dorry slowly. "That's not when it was *taken*. That's when it happened. There's a difference, you know."

"I don't know," I told him flatly. "I don't know anything about that. But I *do* know three other things. The first is that I'm shooting this picture upstairs, but fast! It's the hottest news snap ever to hit this sheet. The second is that I'm filing the negative in the office safe for protection. It will be the plaintiff's number one piece of evidence that pegs the railroad with responsibility for this accident and—unless the town fathers of this village are even more stupid than I think they are—will finally compel the railroad to do something about that death-trap."

"And the third?" asked Dorry.

"Will wait," I said, "but not for long. As soon as this matter is tidied up, pal, you and I are going to have a nice little conversation. I want to know the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, about that crazy camera of yours!"

An hour later, I ushered Dorry into my digs, poured him a stiff bourbon, settled him on a seat opposite my own, and said: "Okay, pal—give!"

Dorry squirmed uncomfortably. He said: "Well, it's kind of hard to understand, Mr. Ted—"

"Many things are! Women, the administration's foreign policy, the Einstein theory—"

"It's sort of like that," said Dorry. "Einstein, I mean. Perhaps I'd better show you the camera first."

He drew it from its carrying case. I stared at it with some surprise. It wasn't the Graflex or Speed-Graphic news photographers commonly use. It wasn't one of those foreign makes, either. I didn't know *what* it was. It looked very much like one of those Brownie box cameras you used to use when you were a kid. Only larger. And something new had been added. It did not have just one lens aperture. There were eyeholes on each of the six sides of the cube! Also, it had a gimmick I'd never seen on any other camera. In addition to the conventional range-finder, speed, and trigger mechanisms, it had a circular dial scored off in time segments completely meaningless to me. I studied it thoughtfully, arched questioning eyebrows at Dorry.

"What kind of a camera is *this?*"

"It's my own invention," he answered. "It's a tesseractional camera."

"A which?"

"Tesseractional. Do you know what a tesseract is?"

"Pass," I told him.

"A tesseract," he interpreted, "is a hyper-cube."

"Still pass. How about a new deal?"

"A hyper-cube," he continued desperately, "is to a cube what a cube is to a square. Does that make sense?"

"In a meaningless sort of way. Let's make like I'm a Grade A dope, and take it from there. Can you explain it in words of one syllable?"

"Well, I'll try." He paused, brooding quietly for a moment. Then: "A line," he said. "How many dimensions does it have?"

"A straight line? Why, just one. Length."

"That's right. Now, a line is made up of—"

"Points."

"Yes. And if you were to extend the points in that line in right angles to the direction of the line, what would you get?"

"A square?" I hazarded.

"Correct. Now, if you extend all the points in the plane of that square once more at right angles to the two dimensions of the square, what do you get?"

"A cube," I said, more certainly this time.

"Of course. A cube—a three-dimensional object." Dorry nodded gravely. "Now comes the hard part. What I want you to do next will seem intuitively impossible. And so it is, from a practical point of view. But it is a mathematical possibility, none the less.

"Extend the points of that cube once more at right angles to the three dimensions of the cube, and *now* what do you get?"

"A headache," I told him promptly. "It can't be done. You'd be moving in the fabled fourth dimension."

"Exactly!" agreed Dorry. "And that's precisely what this camera of mine *is*. It's a fourth-dimensional figure known to scientists as a hyper-cube, or tesseract. A closed object bounded by eight cubes, having sixteen vertices, twenty-four faces, and thirty-two edges. They are all *there*. The reason you cannot see them is simply that you are looking at them through three-dimensional eyes. In

*"Okay, pal—give!"*

other words, you can no more visualize what this camera *really* looks like than could a Flatlander—a man who lives in a world of two dimensions—visualize the finger we thrust through his sheet-of-paper world. He would see only a circle, a cross-section of that finger. Now do you understand?"

I rubbed my chin.

"Dimly," I said. "But we're off the main point. I'm willing to accept the theory briefly on faith. But what I want to know is—how does the camera work?"

"Well, I'll show you." He fingered the dial of his curious box, frowned at me mildly, then asked: "Were you home last night?"

"Yes."

"What were you doing?"

"Me? Oh, nothing much. Couple of the boys dropped in for a game of stud," I lied cheerily. "Why?"

"I just wanted to make sure." He finished setting his stops. "All right. Watch the camera."

"The traditional phrase," I said, "is, 'Watch the birdie!' However—"

A FLASH bulb flared, blinding me briefly. So to be utterly truthful, I'm not positive of what I saw. But for an instant I got the *impression* that Dorry's camera weirdly and mysteriously blossomed in his hands. Yes, *blossomed.* It appeared to grow, leaping, expanding, into an incredible and monstrous something which looked like a lopsided tower of adjacent cubes. Then the flash faded, my eyes stopped burning, and the box in his hands was its normal self. Dorry asked: "Do you have a darkroom?"

"In there," I nodded. "Don't slip on the soap."

He disappeared into my combination lav and laboratory. I sat moodily nursing my drink, wondering how anyone could possibly construct a fourth-dimensional object out of three-dimensional materials, and finally deciding he could not. I further decided, as I sipped my second drink, that there was something very wacky about Mr. Joseph Dorry, and that I intended to find out what it was. I poured myself a third drink and decided that if wheedling wouldn't work, I could always try the more direct approach of a swift punch in the nose.

Then there was an apologetic cough from the bathroom doorway, and Dorry entered, bearing in his hand a damp print.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Ted," he said.

I leered at him. "Didn't work, eh? I thought it might flop on a test run. Okay, sonny. Suppose we cut out the stalling, now, and you tell me how you *really* got the inside dope on those two events?"

"Oh, no sir. You don't understand. I mean I'm sorry about *this.* I wasn't trying to be nosey. But you told me you were playing poker—"

I took one horrified glance at the picture he held forth. Maybe I'm a gentleman after all, because my face got as red as his. I snatched the considerably-too-candid shot from him.

"See here, you!" I snarled. "What's the big idea? Is this a new twist on the badger game? What were you snooping around here for last night? And how long have you known Flossie?"

"Flossie?" he repeated. "Is that her name?"

"You mean you didn't know? You didn't shoot this last night?"

"No sir. That's the picture I took five minutes ago."

I stared at him numbly for a long moment. I looked at the picture again. Like Dorry, it was honest—and disturbing. Gallantly I tore the print into confetti and tossed the incriminating evidence into my wastebasket. Then I fumblingly poured nerve-tonic number four.

"Okay, chum," I conceded, "you've sold me. You've invented a fourth-dimensional camera that can perform miracles. But I still want to know—*how* does it work?"

HE elaborated then. I could repeat most of what he told me, but what would be the use? You wouldn't understand much more of it than I did, and I didn't understand *any* of it. Boiled down to rock-bottom essentials, here's what it amounted to: Dorry had invented a camera which took pictures through the fourth dimension. The fourth dimension is the *time* dimension. Dorry proved this. He pointed out that we arrange our everyday engagements in four dimensions. We agree to meet a friend at such-and-such a corner (length and breadth), on the ground level or a certain floor (depth), and at a certain hour (time). It sounded good when he said it, and I couldn't give him a rebuttal.

Well, then, Dorry's tesseractional camera took its pictures in time as well as the other three dimensions. The circular dial was its time-selector. By setting it, he could focus the lens on any event that had happened, was happening, or was going to happen before that lens at any instant, past, present or future.

"That's how I got the picture of the show winner," he explained, "and of the exact moment of the accident. Also of—"

He blushed and faltered to embarrassed silence.

That's when I got my bright idea. I said: "Dorry, one more question: Why in the name of all that's holy, did you ever decide to become a news photographer?"

"Oh, I don't know. Because I've always admired you newspaper men, I guess. It's such a romantic profession—"

"I know a doughnut manufacturer," I told him, "who will buy those holes in your head! In addition to being the world's most wistful dreamer, you're a dope! Didn't it ever occur to you that your incredible gizmo is

***"If I can find a way to actually peek into the future—" said Joe.***

worth approximately umpteen billion bucks, plus sales tax?"

"You mean I could make and sell these cameras? Oh, I'm planning to do that—later. When I've ironed out a few wrinkles. There are still some things—"

"Sell it, yes. But not yet. First feather your own nest with gold fleece. If you can take pictures of future events, why not clean up a tidy fortune by betting on the results of impending certainties: horse-races, baseball games, stock-market rises, and the like?"

Dorry shook his head sadly.

"I've thought of that, Mr. Ted. But it won't work. That's one of the things my camera still can't do."

"But you took a picture of Castle of Blarney Brian before he won the dog show!"

"Yes. But the picture wouldn't come out of the developer until the moment the decision was made. You see, the image is latent on the film, but it can't emerge until whatever it portrays actually *happens.*"

"And the railroad accident—"

"Had already happened. I can shoot anything out of the past, but the future remains a blank until it becomes the present. That's one of the things I'm still working on. If I can find a way actually to peek into the future—"

"We'll be set for life," I gloated. "As it is, the camera's good enough to make us financially independent."

"We?" puzzled Dorry.

"We," I repeated firmly. "Joseph, my lad, you're a brilliant young man, but you need a manager. Someone who has been around and knows all the angles. Namely, myself. We'll form a partnership and parlay this hyper-cube of yours into the surplus-income brackets."

"You really mean it?" he cried delightedly. "You'll be my partner? Gosh, Mr. Ted, that's wonderful! You sure are good to me. What shall we call ourselves? Gray and Dorry?"

"And miss a title opportunity that comes once in a millennium?" I snorted. "Not on your life, chum! Did you ever hear of a character named Oscar Wilde? We're using the name he gave us years before we were born. Tomorrow we resign our jobs at the dear old *Times-News* and go into business together—snapping the pictures of Dorry & Gray!"

So that's how it all started. And it was just as I had predicted; it took no time at all for the results of our photography to make us famous. The pictures of Dorry & Gray— Oh, you have seen some of 'em? The tornado shots, eh? We got those the day *after* the big blow knocked the town apart, but our pictures were taken as at the moment of impact from the heart of the twister. And the Third National holdup—*that* was a funny one. Just a lucky break for us. It caused the bank robbers to be captured, but we didn't even know we had a picture of them until the story broke, and a previously blank negative swimming in Dorry's soup bowl suddenly formed an image.

***"You could see . . . that he had been hooked."***

Cabinet photography, too. That was a fat source of revenue. We had a fine old time snapping pictures of pudgy females and balding brokers who cheerfully paid through the nose to recapture semblances of themselves in the Good Old Days before crow's feet and gray hair.

Meanwhile, Dorry continued tinkering with his gizmo, constantly experimenting to find some way of actually viewing tomorrow before it got here. In this I encouraged him. And so we were rolling along beautifully, cashing checks from our private clients, from the news agencies and picture journals, from advertising agencies and practically everyone else with a bank account—when the roof caved in. Dorry fell in love.

I've got no one but myself to blame for that. I'm the one who introduced him to Jean Conroy. I brought her to our studio to pose for some swimsuit art. One of our agency accounts. After I'd shot a few stills, I got the bright idea of getting Dorry to snap one of the same gal with a slightly younger face. Not that Jean *needed* any Elizabeth Arden treatment, understand! At twenty-three, she was a pulse-palpitator in any man's league. But there's a freshness, an eagerness, a verve to the eighteen-year-old that she loses after she's been fighting off metropolitan wolves for a while—you know what I mean?

I called to Joe, who was working in the back of the shop, and he came in lugging his camera. He took one look at Jean, and it was Katy-bar-the-door. You could see by the laboring of his gills that he had been hooked, landed and dipped in bread-crumbs for frying the instant he laid eyes on her.

I made polite talk-talk for a moment, trying to give his eyes time to retract into their sockets.

"Jean, this is my partner, Joe Dorry. Joe—Jeanie Conroy, sister of an old flame of mine. For whom," I added truthfully, "the home fires never have stopped burning. Where is Jane now, Jeanie? Still in Hollywood?"

"Oh, no. She came back a few months ago. Haven't you seen her?"

"Are you kidding? After what happened the last time we had a date—"

"Oh, *that!*" sniffed Jean. "Jane's forgiven you for that long ago. Why don't you call her sometime, Ted?"

"Well, if I thought she wouldn't hang up on me—"

"She won't. She still thinks of you, I know. In fact, your picture's on her dressing-table. So you see—"

***"No," he said slowly. "No, it didn't work, Mr. Ted."***

"P-pup!" Dorry broke in suddenly. "Pup-pup-pup—"

We both turned to stare at him, Jean with something like alarm. She asked me anxiously: "What is it, Ted? Does he think he's a motorboat?"

"Pup-picture!" managed Joe explosively. "Take your picture!"

I studied Dorry shrewdly. There was nothing wrong with him, I realized, that could not be cured by a dosage of moonlight and roses, music and a medley of sweet nothings. I said: "Look, Jean—I can't work up to this reconciliation too quickly. But if you could help me out a little—"

"How?"

"Well, perhaps you could make a date or two with Joe? Then after a week or so you could suggest a double date to Jane—a blind date with Joe's partner. You wouldn't have to mention my name. Once she had committed herself—"

Jean asked demurely: "Well, if Mr. Dorry would not mind being forced into my company that way—"

"P-pup!" strangled Dorry. "Pup-pup-pup—"

"His motor's revving again," I sighed.

"Pup-pleasure!" gasped Dorry. "Tonight?"

"Very well. Tonight," grinned Jean impishly. And for some incomprehensible reason, the amused glance she gave my gangling partner was not at all unkind.

Love is not only blind; it's deaf and dumb, as well. There was no earthly reason why a harmful armful like Jeanie should have warmed to a lunk like Joe Dorry. But that's just what happened. The wench who could have had her pick of the crop wasted no time in making it clear that she was one brief ceremony short of signing her charge accounts *Mrs. Joseph T. Dorry.*

Which was all right with me, mind you! I was glad the kids had gone for each other like that. I liked both of them, and Joe was my partner. But all I mean is, women are peculiar. So ridiculously— Oh, pardon me, ma'am.

Dorry was so topsy-turvy with the stuff that makes the world go round that he forgot all about my plan to renew auld acquaintance with Jean's sister. He had suddenly discovered the truth of the adage that three's a crowd; I guess he figured four would be a mass demonstration. So we didn't ever get around to attempting that double date. In fact, so engrossed were Jean and Joe with each other that Dorry never even got to meet Jean's sister.

This was a big mistake—because if he had merely been introduced to her once—

But I'm getting off the main line. I'll rush it to a conclusion, now, because it's getting late, and I want to talk to that boss of yours before he gets out of here today.

I waited impatiently for three weeks for Dorry and Jean to arrange that double date. Nothing happened. Finally I decided to do something about it myself. After all, Jean had said my picture was still on her sister's bureau. Girls don't usually frame for reference their nominations to the Man-I-Wouldn't-Be-Caught Dead-With presidency. So one afternoon I clutched my courage in two hot little hands and dialed the Conroy apartment. The voice that answered the telephone retained its never-forgotten power to send little hot caterpillars crawling up and down my spine. After I had stopped tingling I said, "Jane, this is Ted—Ted Gray."

I held the phone a safe distance from my ears so my drums wouldn't be shattered by the crash of descending bakelite. But my fears were unfounded. To my vast surprise and delight, Jane's reply was encouraging.

"Ted! Why, how nice to hear from you again!"

AND—well, after that it was smooth sailing. Our conversation ended with an invitation to come see her, a fast acceptance of the suggestion for that very night, and all of a sudden *my* private universe took on a hue to match the rosiness of that in which Dorry had been cavorting for the past few weeks. I was singing gayly when Joe came back from the supply shop with some new equipment. He stared at me in astonishment.

"Gosh, Mr. Ted, what's the matter with you? Sick?"

"Sick? My dear boy, I—"

"I heard you moaning halfway down the street, so I hurried as fast as I could. Here! Sit down and let me—"

"Dolt!" I snorted. "Unreasoning, unreasonable mortal, gitten yore filthy paws offen me afore I plug ya! Don't you have any of the finer sensibilities? Don't you recognize *l'amour, toujours l'amour* when you see it?"

He stared at me nervously.

"Is it catching?" he asked.

"Very likely. I probably got it from you. Dorry, my boy, behold a rejuvenated man. I am in love!"

"You *are?*"

"Please!" I winced. "Need you sound so completely incredulous, Joe? Yes, little man, I have succumbed to the lure of Daniel J. Cupid, Esq. I feel burning within me the flame of a sweet and wholesome passion—and I think the feeling is shared by the party of the second part."

"Golly!" gulped Joe. "That's won-

derful. Now both of us, huh? Who is she, Mr. Ted?"

"She—" I began. Then caution asserted itself. I didn't want to make an utter fool of myself. Perhaps it had been wishful thinking on my part to believe that Jane's voice was so very warm, so more-than-friendly. "Well, I—I'd rather not tell you that just now, Joe."

"Not even *me?*" He sounded hurt. "Your partner?"

"*Particularly* you. I have a good reason. Believe me, lad. I wouldn't want to hurt your feelings, but—well, later, perhaps?"

"Okay," he shrugged. "Whatever you say, Mr. Ted."

"And Joe," I went on seriously, "this makes a big difference in our lives. Yours, mine, Jean's—all of us—it has become doubly important, now, that we increase our efforts to make good. No struggling marriage for me. My wife must have the best of everything—which means you and I must step up our income. Tell me, how are you coming along with that future-focusing feature on your camera?"

"You know, I think I'm beginning to get somewhere with that, Mr. Ted. I'm not *certain,* but if my figuring is right, a new improvement I added just this afternoon might do the trick. Do you want to try it?"

"Sure. What do we do?"

"You just stand still. I'm going to take a picture of you *here;* but if my new idea is correct, the time-warping shutter I just installed will throw a shunt across the space dimensions and take a picture of you wherever you're going to be at the time I set the dial for.

"Just for example," he continued, "where will you be at—oh, let's say nine o'clock tonight?"

I grinned at him secretively. "No comment," I said.

"Well, okay. Then at ten tomorrow morning?"

"Breakfast, probably."

"All right. Let's try it and see what happens."

He uncrated his box, set the dial, snapped me. Then he scowled. "Aw, heck! Made a mistake. Let's try it again, Mr. Ted." This time, after resetting the dial, he was satisfied. "All right. Got it. Now you snap me."

"At any particular time?"

"No. A couple of weeks from now, maybe? Then we can find out where I'm going to be, and what I'll be doing. That should be fun, huh?"

"I hope so," I agreed dubiously. "I'm just beginning to realize that this improvement could prove a bit embarrassing from time to time. But okay. Here goes!"

I set the time dial for one month later, snapped the shutter. It was the first time I had ever used Dorry's gadget; I felt a curious tremor of emotion when I felt the camera twist and somehow *grow* under my grasp. But the sensation ended almost before I began to experience it, and Dorry reclaimed his instrument.

"Fine," he said. "Now I'll develop these, and we'll see what comes out. Want to watch?"

"No, thanks. I've got to dress. That heavy date, you know!" I grinned at him. "Good luck, kid. I hope you've got it this time."

He disappeared into the darkroom.

Ten minutes later he emerged. I grunted a query at him from my doubled position over my shoelaces. "Well, Joe?"

His voice was gray, colorless, dejected. So was his expression, when finally I lifted to behold it.

"No," he said slowly. "It didn't work, Mr. Ted."

"Too bad," I sympathized. "But don't worry. You'll get it sooner or later, pal. Keep trying. Hey—hadn't you better start getting dressed?"

"What for?" he asked dully.

"What *for!* Don't you have a date with Jean tonight?"

He winced, and for an instant the look of pained resignation in his eyes was replaced by one of anger. Then the petulance died. He merely said reproachfully: "That was sort of a mean thing to say, Mr. Ted."

"Mean? What are you talking about? I merely—hey! Hey, Joe, come back here! What—"

I was talking to a still-quivering door. Dorry had left in a gangling, stiff-legged huff. I stared after him a moment or two, then resumed dressing. Lovers' quarrel—that was the way I figured it. Well, it would pass. Such things do in time. As witness my own renascence, my own date with Jane tonight.

I started singing again. Anybody who says my singing sounds like moaning is crazy. I was terrific.

So was Jane. We didn't go out that evening. There were too many things we had to talk over, too much lost time we had to make up for. We said all the things we should have said months ago; then there was a little weeping on her part and a little promising on mine, and some salty kisses which were strangely sweet—and what with one thing and another I didn't even realize how late it was getting to be, until Jean came in and caught us making like two toasted marshmallows on the divan.

I didn't even try to wipe the lipstick off. I just grinned at her and said: "Okay, take it easy. Don't say anything harsh to your brother."

"Brother?"

"In law," I nodded, "as soon as we can get a parson to say the proper words over us. Where's Joe?"

"That's just what I was going to ask *you,*" Jeanie said. "He was supposed to meet me at eleven tonight, but he didn't show up. I had an earlier engagement with a booking agent—business you know. Joe didn't seem to like the idea very much. I hope he's not angry."

"If he is," I said cheerfully, "he won't stay that way long. I've got a great idea. Let's all run over to our place and surprise him with the good news about Jane and me? Then we'll adjourn to Mike's Grill and celebrate the coming event with an armload of Martinis. Good thought?"

"Excellent," said Jane from the circle of my arm.

"Excellent," echoed Jean, "with a minor revision. We'll celebrate the coming events."

"Huh?"

"Well, one, then. But a *double* wedding. Darned if I'm going to let my own sister beat me to the orange-blossom and burned biscuit brigade. Let's go find Joe and advise him that he's just become engaged."

So we went to the apartment I shared with Joe. But no Joe. In the living-room, no Joe; in the bedroom, no Joe; in the kitchen, nothing but the remnants of a sandwich barely nibbled. I frowned at my lovely guests.

"This I don't get. Joe never goes out alone. As a matter of fact, he hardly ever went out at all until he met Jean. He spent most of his time working on his camera."

"Then maybe he's in the darkroom," suggested Jane.

"Possibly," I acknowledged. I went into the darkroom. And that's where I found Joe's farewell letter.

It wasn't really a letter. It was a note. A sad little note. It said:

> *Mr. Ted, I'm sorry now I tricked you, but I guess it's better this way. I hope you and Jean will be very happy. I'll never come back to bother you, so please don't worry about me. Or try to find me.*
>
> *Yours, Joe Dorry.*

I read it with a sense of frustrated incredulity. Joe had tricked me? How? And what was better *what* way? And why should he hope Jean and I would be happy? *Jane* was my heartthrob, not Jean. And Dorry knew nothing about Jane. So his note didn't make sense. Not a grain of sense. Until—

Until I happened to glance at the drying-racks, and found there the pictures that had caused Dorry's gloom when last I saw him, the pictures taken by an improved camera

that finally *could* foresee the future, the devastating shots that had sent the romantic Joe into his self-sacrifice act.

One of those pictures showed me seated at the telephone—as at ten o'clock the next morning I *was* seated—frantically calling anyone who might be able to help me catch Dorry and halt him in his headlong flight.

The second picture was the one with which Dorry had tricked me, the one which had previewed my activities at nine o'clock that evening. It showed me curled on the divan in an apartment familiar to Joe, ardently making up for lost time with a girl who was obviously enjoying herself as much as I was.

And the third picture—well, ma'am, that's why I'm here. Jane won't marry me till I get to Joe, explain matters, and bring him back to his brokenhearted Jean. I *know* it's hard to get a passport these days, but you've simply *got* to help me, because it means so much to all of us. And maybe to the United States Government, as well. Do you realize what that camera of Joe's can do now? It takes pictures of coming events. Think how the War Department could use *that!* A preview pipeline into the Kremlin's inner secrets—

Eh? What did that third picture show? I *told* you Joe was a romantic sort of goof, didn't I? Well, where do all moonstruck lovers go when their hearts are broken? Sure! I don't know how Joe managed to get there. But I've got to go there, too. Because that third picture, with its time selector set for *next week,* shows Joe Dorry lined up with a group of enlistees before a mustachioed recruiting officer of the French Foreign Legion! I've got to get to that Morocco outpost and stop him before he signs those papers or—

Oh, you will? Gee, that's swell Thanks, ma'am. I'll never forget—What's that? One more question? Of course. Anything you want to know.

Why did Joe think Jean and I—Why, didn't I *tell* you? You see, he thought Jane was Jean. Being sisters, they look a lot like each other. And of course they swap clothes sometimes. All he could see in the picture was the familiar background of an apartment he had often visited. Jane's face was obscured by mine. We were—well, pretty close when the picture was taken—

Ironic, isn't it? That two of the smartest cameramen who ever lived should come to grief because of a double exposure?

Yes, ma'am. This door? Thanks a million!

How do you do, Mr. Under-secretary— THE END

# INFINITY

**This brief story and the foregoing *jeu d'esprit* by Nelson Bond reached this office almost at the same time. They are wholly different; yet both are based upon a similar idea. We are printing them together to avoid the impression that one derived from the other.**

by FRED E. ROSS

"WHAT can I do for you?" the old shopkeeper asked. "Oh, I'm just looking around," I said. "I saw your sign and came in, but I don't have anything in mind—except maybe a lens to fit a five-by-seven view camera."

The little man pursed his lips and frowned. "Let me think."

He was looking so intently at me that I didn't mind if he noticed me eying him. He was the queerest-looking fellow I had ever seen. He was small in stature, and judging by the appearance of his skin, he must have been at least ninety years old. His eyes, though, seemed even older. His eyelids were narrowed to the point of being almost closed; and if he had had any eyelashes, I couldn't have seen his eyes at all. As it was, I saw only enough to notice that the jet black pupils faded to a dark gray at each corner of his eyes. There was no white. Those black pupils gathered the light and reflected it at me in a steady gaze.

His ears were large, as was his hooked nose, and the ears went up into a sharp peak. He was entirely bald, toothless, and the skin stretched tightly across his prominent facial bones resembled parchment.

He drummed his gnarled fingers on the counter for a long minute and then said: "I do have a lens, although I really ought to keep it. Why do you need a lens?"

I started for the door, figuring that he was a crank. "I don't want your lens," I said.

Reaching out a bony hand, he clutched my sleeve. "Wait. I like your looks. Let me show you the lens."

He reached below the counter and brought up a small iron box. Unlocking it with a key suspended from a chain he wore around his neck, he lifted out a package wrapped in tissue. As he worked with the paper, he said: "This lens will fit any five-by-seven camera. It is a very old lens, having been ground by a master craftsman of another generation. Here, look at it."

The lens looked like the cheapest sort of glass, and was in a cumbersome, old-fashioned mounting. I could do better than that at any war-surplus store, so I handed it back to him and shook my head. "I believe I'll look around before I buy."

"You'll never find another lens like this one," he said. "It isn't coated, and the diaphragm stops run only from f:9 to f:18. But there is something unusual about this lens. If you will look closely, you will see a faint mark on the lens aperture scale. It's just beyond the f:18 setting. Stop the lens down to that mark sometime. You'll be surprised at what you get. It goes into an automatic focus then, so don't worry about the distance scale or bother to sight through the ground-glass back of your camera. And don't rack the camera bellows out to the infinity sign to start with. You ought to work up to that. I wouldn't tell you this if I didn't like your looks. And besides, I've got to be moving on."

"I still don't want the lens," I said.

"But the other stores are closed, for today's a holiday. You can't buy a lens anywhere else today. I'll let you have this one at your own price."

"But I don't want it. I'm just an amateur looking for a lens to fit an old view camera. I don't know why I even came in here, for your sign is so faded and dirty that I could scarcely read it. The only part that stood out was *Camera Supplies.* But I'll be going now, if you'll turn my sleeve loose."

His bony hand still gripped my arm and his voice was urgent. "Go on, buy it. There's not another lens like it in the world."

The urge to get out of his shop, more than anything else, prompted me to say: "I'll give you two dollars for it."

I expected him to refuse the offer. Instead, he beamed at me and said: "It's yours. Let me wrap it up."

"No," I said, feeling cheated, "just hand it to me."

Out on the street I looked back, then wondered if my eyes didn't need checking. The small dingy sign read, ANTIQUES AND GLASSWARE. Nowhere did the place advertise camera supplies. In the dusty window there was a *Closed* sign. I shook my head and went to my car.

It really was a holiday, and to punish myself for my stupidity in driving forty miles over a rough road to try to trade on a holiday, I went straight home without treating myself to a drink or a show.

SINCE I had nothing else to do that night, I fitted the lens to my camera and tried it out. The only subject available was a little potted plant the landlady had given me. After arranging my floodlights and snapping a picture, I remembered what the old man had said about shooting at that mark just past f:18. So I took a picture, using that setting.

The negatives came out of the developing tank sharp and clear. The first exposure convinced me that I had a fine lens, for the little plant was pictured on the negative perfectly. But the second exposure puzzled me. I couldn't figure out what I had. So I hooked up the enlarger and made a print. The picture showed a shriveled plant, the foliage shed, and the little branches twisted.

Remembering the old shopkeeper's manner, I had a hunch then of what sort of lens I had bought. But to make sure, I called the landlady and asked if I could take a picture of her four-year-old son. She agreed, as usual, and in a jiffy I had snapped the little fellow and was in the darkroom, developing the film. Later I told the landlady that the negative was a blank, for my print showed a man of about thirty years, dressed in a prison uniform.

I WAS QUITE busy with picture-taking for the next few weeks, and had to use the new lens, for it was the only one I had. ON every portrait job I made an extra negative, with the lens set at that faint mark just past the f:18 line. In that way I picked up a pretty clear view of what was in store for some people around the town. The only time I racked the bellows out to the infinity mark was when a rich, greedy old man asked me to make his picture as a sort of public service. The infinity picture showed him in a dismal place, surrounded by fire and smoke. . . .

The desire to peep into my own future grasped me, and although I fought against it I started taking pictures of myself, using a timing device to trip the shutter after I moved in front of the lens. I started off by using six feet on the distance scale, then moved to eight. There was no apparent difference from the way I already looked. Then I tried twelve feet, fifteen, and finally thirty. The image resembled a much older man then.

After using the last footage setting on the distance scale, right before the infinity mark came up, I realized that in my old age I would be in fairly good health, judging by the pictures. And that knowledge was enough for a few weeks. Then I started wondering what would show up if I set the scale at infinity. For more than a year I held back. Then one blustery, rainy night I set up the camera, racked the bellows out to the infinity mark, set the delayed-action mechanism and moved in front of the camera. . . .

I was nervous while waiting for the developer and the acid to work on the film. Finally, though, it was ready to bear the light. I opened the tank and took out the sheet of film. There, if I would only look, was my eternal future.

TURNING my head as far to one side as I could, and closing my eyes, I ripped the film into shreds. After wadding the strips into a ball inside my fist I opened my eyes and made my way to the bathroom. There I flushed the film away.

*Drawn by Clinton Shepherd*

*"Go on, buy it. There's not another lens like it in the world."*

# UNDERWATER

"No more Tarawas!" This was the watchword of the "frog men," whose hazardous job it was to clear the way for subsequent amphibious landings by swimming under water to blow up the obstacles placed by the enemy to defend their beaches.

# DEMOLITION TEAM

## *by* EDWARD T. HIGGINS *with* DEAN PHILLIPS

IN these pages we have written the story of the U. S. Navy's famous "Frog Men" and their underwater demolition operations. More particularly it is the story of Underwater Demolition Team No. 11, one of the twenty-one teams trained at Camp Perry, Virginia, Fort Pierce, Florida, and on the island of Maui in the Hawaiians.

Actually little was known even inside the Navy of the real purpose and scope of underwater demolition operations. The very words discouraged curiosity and made recruiting difficult within the service. Repeated bulletins and announcements made rapid progress into convenient waste receptacles. No one in his right mind asked too many questions or signed any unread documents. Even shore- and desk-bound men who itched for action and who railed at the red tape that kept them from battle and glory chose to ignore the increasing requests for volunteers for underwater demolition training.

The first and by all odds the most bitter lesson in the need for blasting clear landing channels for beach invasions was Tarawa. It was a lesson written in blood, written in salt water and coral reefs, in bodies rolling in the surf, in United States Marines thirty feet under water, weighted down by combat gear, in landing craft stranded on reefs and obstacles, blasted by Jap fire.

From this and other costly lessons came a plan for the formation and training of volunteers into demolition units. The Navy Construction Battalions or Seabees took the initial step and organized the first formal training at Camp Perry, Virginia, on June 1, 1943. It was too late for Tarawa, but it was early enough to send trained teams into action for the invasions of Sicily in the European Theater, and of countless Japanese island strongholds in the Pacific. Our invasion of Fortress Europe and the hop, step and jump of our armed forces to Tokyo Bay will testify to the success of the training of the Underwater Demolition Teams and to the skill and enterprise with which they plied their hazardous trade.

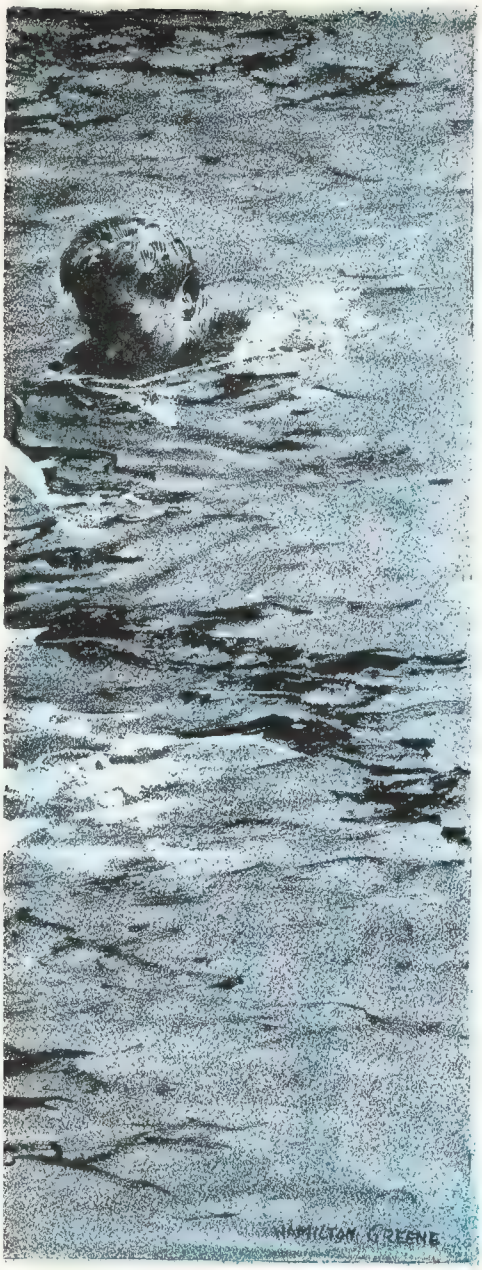
*They were still there, Lindsey and his three men, bleeding and dazed, hanging on to the*

Basically the term "underwater demolition" means just that—the demolishing of objects under the surface of the water. This is too broad a definition for our purpose in this narrative, however, and it seems best at this point to explain its actual meaning as applied to the Navy's amphibious and beach-landing techniques.

Over a period of months the Germans and Japanese had realized that an invasion by Allied forces must of necessity be an amphibious operation, conducted under adverse conditions and confined to accessible and therefore heavily defended beaches. In order to make such landings as hazardous as possible and yet reduce the number of standby troops stationed in isolated and island areas, the military commands of the countries involved constructed elaborate anti-ship, anti-vehicle, and anti-personnel obstacles on these beaches. These obstacles were fashioned of every conceivable material and in every conceivable manner. In nearly all cases they were located in the water just offshore along the beaches—concrete piles, railroad ties, rusty rails, hardwood posts set in coral or concrete, barbed wire, scrap steel—always just at the right depth to trap and impale boats, men and machines which, so held, became sitting-duck targets for guns trained on the beach. In addition to the man-made obstacles, the islands in the Pacific had natural coral reefs which served the same deadly efficient purpose. These traps, natural and man-made, had to be removed before any landing in force could be made successfully.

This, then, was "underwater demolition," a most efficient stratagem for avoiding the complications of old age. The swimmers of the Underwater Demolition Teams became the "wave before the first wave," clearing the beaches and erecting welcome signs to baffle and mystify the assault waves of invading troops who had little if any knowledge of this preliminary invasion.

The men engaged in this work were with few exceptions very young. The average age of the members of Team 11 as they left Maui for operations in the Pacific was 21.3 years for enlisted men, and twenty-four years for officers. Yet they operated under the most trying and dangerous conditions




*still-floating shreds of their boat.*

of modern warfare. They kept and advanced in their original ratings as a matter of security, their ranks filled with cooks who never cooked, shipfitters who never worked on a ship, and storekeepers who never kept a single store. Until after the end of the war no insignia or recognition was given to distinguish them from other naval units, a situation which resulted in considerable confusion when they returned to the States and were assigned the duties of their ratings by uninitiated commanding officers.

If the value of their work and the valor of their conduct is to be judged on the basis of official citations, it is sufficient to state that to the approximately three thousand men involved awards were made far in excess of those to any other branch of the Naval service, or possibly to any other branch of any service. Decorations given to Underwater Demolition Team personnel included 750 Bronze Stars, 150 Silver Stars, a Navy Cross and several Presidential Unit Citations. One group alone received 225 Bronze Stars, forty Silver Stars and a Navy Cross.

As souvenirs, many of the men carried enemy bullets caught under water while under fire on unfriendly beaches. Fine souvenirs they were, but they served as more than souvenirs. They were testimony to the clear landing beaches left behind.

Because of the Frog Men, there would be no more Tarawas.

On the night of January 1, 1945, the team, still without a regular C.O., took part with U.D.T's 12, 13 and 16 in a final demolition rehearsal for our first combat operation—at Iwo Jima. Commander D. C. Kaufman was in overall command, and conceived and directed the rehearsal. Plans called for all four teams to load adjacent sections of beach with sandbags and a double trunk-line of live prima-cord, tying all four trunks together. Each team was to fire its section of beach simultaneously upon a given signal.

We came in from the ocean in our LCP (R)'s and dropped off into the water with our sandbags, powder and prima-cord. The bags, cord and fuses were lashed to a small bladder raft and towed from a line attached to the waist of each swimmer. The water was dark and rolling with heavy swells as we struggled toward the distant line of the surf breaking on the beach, holding to our assigned areas by the luminous dials of the compasses strapped to our wrists, as the boats behind us poured machine-gun and cannon fire into the shore beyond the beach. Overhead tracers marked paths of light against the night.

Because of the split-second timing schedule for each phase of the operation and the delicate tying-in sequence of the connecting trunk-lines, men were stationed in rubber boats just outside the breaker line. As each swimmer attached his charges to the obstacles, he would gather up the detonating lines, swim to the rubber boat, hand the lines to the waiting men, pick up more charges and cord and go in again to locate more obstacles. The beach loading operation required about two and one-half hours, but it was finally over, and the tired swimmers headed out to sea, some to the LCP (R)'s cruising back and forth, some to the rubber boats to help with the trunk-line tie-in.

It was here that fate tilted the scales against us. Ensign Bill Lindsey had been in the water with his platoon through the entire loading operation, and now he had taken charge of one of the rubber boats to complete the work there. We had run out of waterproofing compound before all the fuses were made up, and two of his fuses were not waterproofed. He knew this, and although the crimping was tight around the hot prima-cord he remained in the boat, holding the fuses out of the water and waiting for the white Very light ten-minute signal.

The ten-minute signal never came. Signals had been changed after the LCP (R)'s started into the beach. The change was flashed by radio, but reception on the small LCP (R)'s receiving sets was too poor, too static-blotted to pick up. The first and only signal was a red Very light—the signal to fire. We saw the signal and watched the beach in horror, knowing that the rubber boat was right in the middle of the hot prima-cord and fuse-connection junctions.

As we watched, the shore line blazed and crackled with fire. Water sprayed and erupted into the air as the powerful prima-cord and fuses detonated under water. We had done a good job, too good this time. Before the fire flared out, we headed our LCP(R) into the beach, searching in the blackness for the spot where the rubber boat had been. We went over the side into the water as soon as we came close, and swam as we had never swum before. They were still there, Lindsey and his three men, bleeding and dazed, hanging on to the still-floating shreds of their boat.

As fast and as gently as possible we pulled them out to the LCP (R) and headed for the mother ship. There we carried them aboard and into the ship's hospital. It was bad. Lindsey's hands were mangled, the fingers blown clear off or hanging by bloody shreds of skin, and his legs shattered where the cord and fuses had lain. His men were less seriously hurt, but all were wounded about the face and chest from the fuse explosions. We knew as we headed back to camp that U.D.T. No. 11 had lost three good men and one of the finest officers in the whole United States Navy.

We didn't sleep much those last hours before dawn. We guessed, and rightly, that with these casualties, added to the loss of our Commanding Officer, we would be shelved for the Iwo Jima invasion. And so it was that U.D.T. No. 13 shoved off for Iwo in our place and we stayed at Maui.

For six weeks longer we trained, practicing underwater techniques and keeping in shape. Lieutenant L. A. States was moved up to command the team, and Lieutenant (j.g.) R. F. Wells from U.D.T. No. 7 came over as our Exec. Replacements came in

for training to replace the men we had lost.

The latter part of January rumors began floating around of impending action. They were confirmed on February 10 when we were joined at a beer party by the crew of the U.S.S. *Kline* (A.P.D. 120). The *Kline* was a Destroyer Escort converted to handle and support demolition operations. She was to be our home for many months in the Pacific, and we surmised that our officers on both sides were anxious to have U.D.T. No. 11 and the ship's crew get acquainted under happy conditions.

At last orders arrived. We were going into combat. We said good-by to Maui on February 14 and shoved off aboard the U.S.S. *Kline* for Eniwetok Atoll and Leyte Gulf in the Philippines.

We had one stop to make between Maui and Eniwetok—the Naval Ammunition Depot at Pearl Harbor. Demolition Team No. 11 had been allocated two of the U.S.S. *Kline's* powder magazines, and we took aboard thirty tons of our own brands of high explosives: two-pound TNT blocks; two-and-one-half pound blocks of Tetrytol, an explosive with a sharper, more shattering effect than TNT; C-2, the new puttylike explosive that could be kneaded like bread dough, wrapped around corners and stuffed into cracks and chinks; miles of primacord reeled on spools like rope, box on box of fuses and detonators. The U.S.S. *Kline* was a floating powder keg.

In addition to our underwater equipment, we also supplied our LCP (R)'s with .50- and .30-caliber machine guns and ammunition, all team personnel with rifles, and all officers and chiefs with .38-caliber revolvers. All platoons were issued new rubber boats and spares and radio parts for the LCP (R) radios.

We cast off late the same day and headed for the open sea, struggling to find our sea legs on the heaving, pitching deck and trying not to think of being seasick.

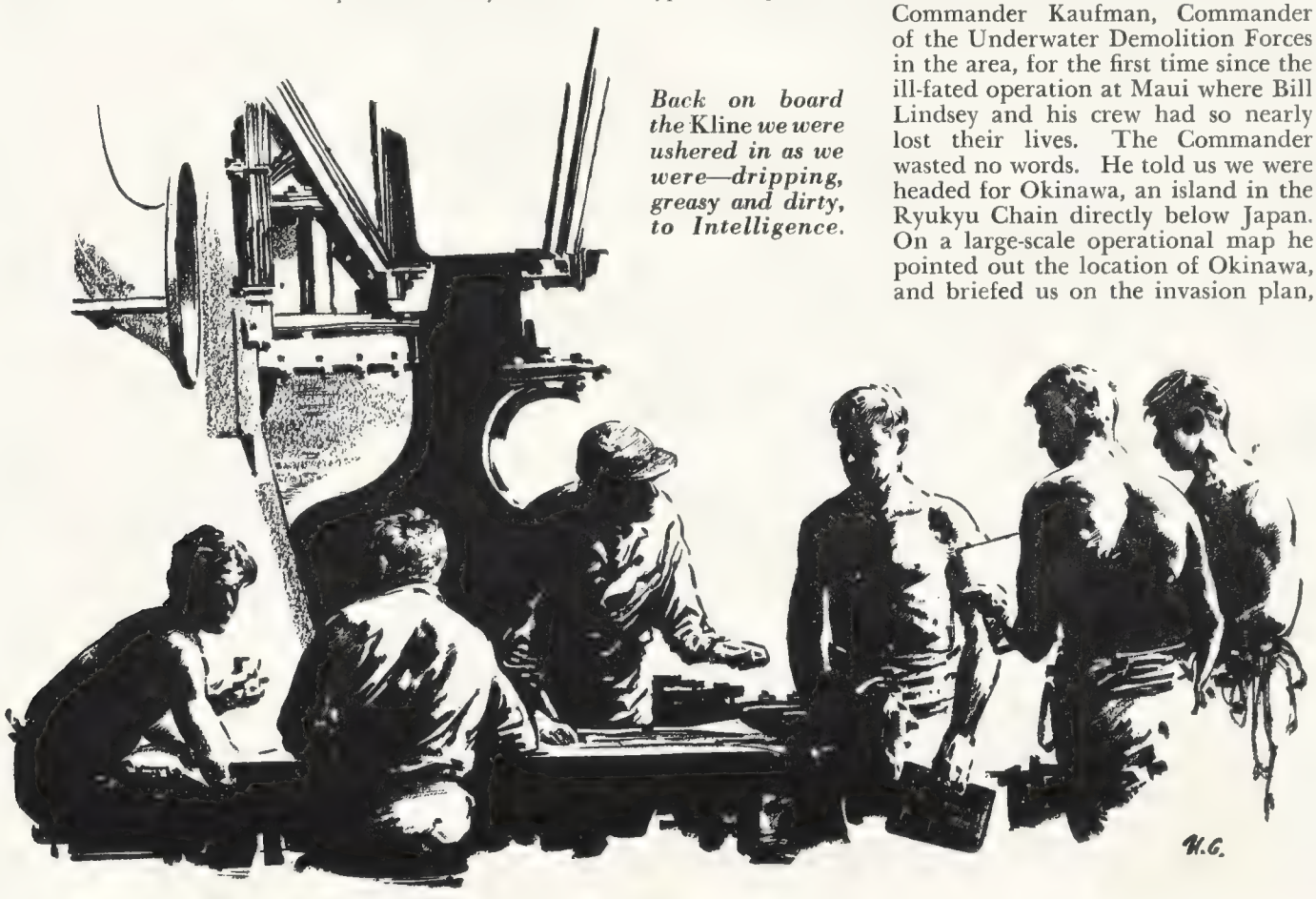
Eniwetok Atoll came and went almost unnoticed. We stopped only overnight, long enough to take on ship stores, and left. Much to our disgust, no one went ashore. A Destroyer Escort like the U.S.S. *Kline* is not a pleasure yacht at best, and with a full crew plus over ninety men of U.D.T. No. 11 aboard, we lived like a barrelful of monkeys rolling downhill.

Our next stop was Leyte Gulf. By early March, 1945, it was the staging area for the next jump toward the home islands of Japan. Until then even we had no real conception of the tremendous armada the Navy had assembled for this conquest. The entire gulf was littered for miles with every conceivable type of ship afloat; battle wagons, squatting low in the blue-gray water, gun turrets bristling, ready for action; aircraft carriers, the queens of the fleet, riding high and proud, decks alive with hornetlike swarms of airplanes landing and taking off to blast the enemy; cruisers, destroyers and destroyer escorts, picturesque in battle camouflage, riding quietly at anchor or cutting gracefully around the perimeter of the anchorage, watching and guarding the mighty fleet against submarine and air attack. Inside the gulf small craft chugged and skittered like water beetles from ship to ship, and ship to shore, carrying messages and supplies and personnel in the never-ending business of war.

We laid over for a day or two resting and stretching, and taking stores and fuel aboard.

On March 9 we moved out of the anchorage and on to Lingayen Gulf, where we staged a practice demolition run on Hononhon Island. The practice helped us get the kinks out of our muscles after the long interval on shipboard, but as we wound up our gear and headed back for Leyte, we still did not know or even guess our impending combat schedule. But we knew the long months of training and rehearsal were about to end.

The morning after the Hononhon Island practice, our commanding officer, Lieutenant L. A. States, assembled us on the fantail. There we met Commander Kaufman, Commander of the Underwater Demolition Forces in the area, for the first time since the ill-fated operation at Maui where Bill Lindsey and his crew had so nearly lost their lives. The Commander wasted no words. He told us we were headed for Okinawa, an island in the Ryukyu Chain directly below Japan. On a large-scale operational map he pointed out the location of Okinawa, and briefed us on the invasion plan,




*Back on board the* Kline *we were ushered in as we were—dripping, greasy and dirty, to Intelligence.*

particularly the rôle assigned U.D.T. No. 11 in locating, surveying and clearing the beaches required for the troop landings. The name Okinawa meant little to us then, and we were taken aback by the scope of the operation and the responsibility of our task in insuring the success of the assault. We knew there had been island invasions before, but this one was on the very doorstep of Japan, and we knew the little brown sons of heaven would be ready for us. We crawled into our bunks that night thinking of home and our families and friends, wondering if we would see them again, and rehearsing a few prayers.

We marked time at Leyte for a few days, then went on ahead of the main fleet, pulling up off Kerama Retta, a small island off Okinawa. It was March 26, a week and a day before Easter Sunday, invasion day.

ANOTHER team was already in the bay preparing for a reconnaissance swim of Kerama Retta that same night. Apparently the reconnaissance indicated the island to be accessible and lightly held, for the 77th Army division moved in the next day and took over—not however without some brisk exchange of fire with the Jap batteries and troops ashore. Situated as it was, the small bit of land had to be taken and held by our troops, for guns ashore commanded the entire bay and would have lacerated our invasion fleet at point-blank range.

Late that night after the 77th had nailed the island down and silenced all opposition, Tokyo Rose announced jubilantly over Radio Tokyo that American forces invading Okinawa had been repulsed even though a fierce battle was still raging. Actually the only thing raging on Okinawa that night was the temper of the Jap officers, still digging out from a severe pounding administered by Admiral Halsey's 3rd Fleet shortly before our arrival. We had enjoyed Tokyo Rose's broadcasts before, but this one in particular did a lot to raise our morale.

The next day was Sunday, and as usual we were awakened at dawn by the General Quarters alarm bell signaling the arrival of the first of the days of Kamikaze attacks. Our ship wasn't bothered much, the suicide boys generally preferring to shoot for the larger targets offered by the battleships and flattops. We wandered about the huge bay for the next two days, March 27 and 28, as elements of the invasion fleet continued to arrive. The weather was foul with mist, rain and a cold wind making things uncomfortable, but offering in return some protection from the ever-increasing Kamikaze runs. Visibility was poor, and the *Kline* took refuge behind the battleship line as the huge ships, accompanied by cruisers and destroyers, moved in their majestic pattern along the shore-line, pounding, pounding, pounding the Jap defenses with every gun they had.

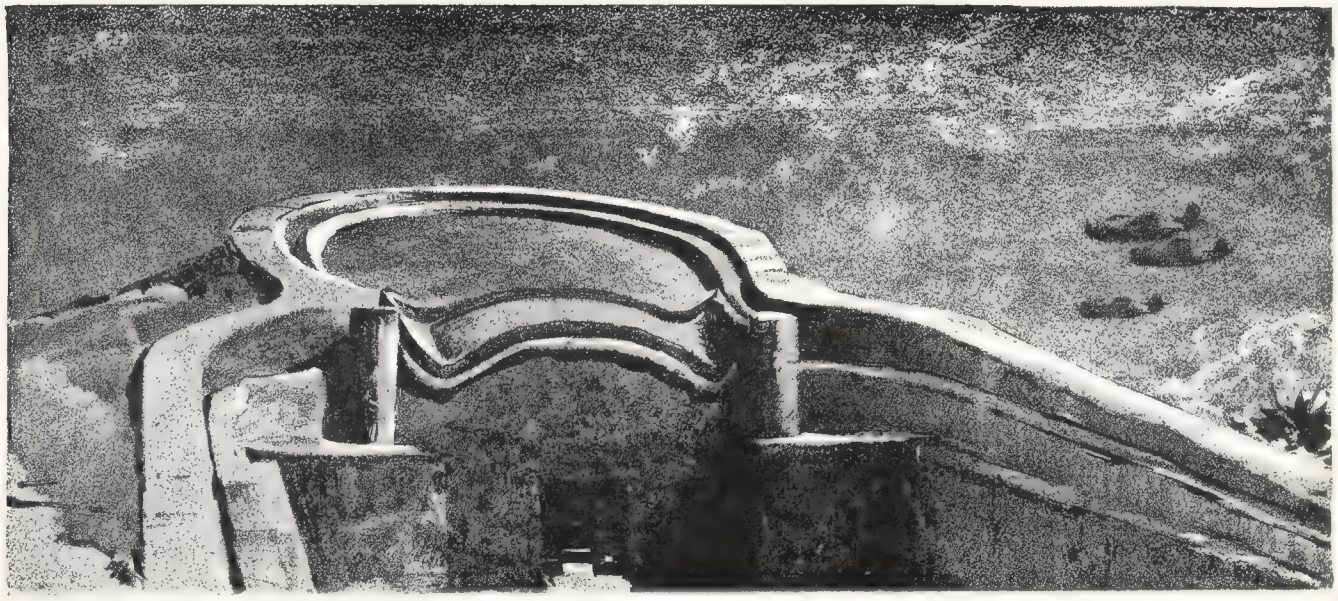
*Illustrated by* HAMILTON GREENE

*Because of the Frog Men, there would be no more Tarawas.*

As the weather permitted, we spent our time on deck searching the beaches with binoculars, observing the results of the incessant firing and picking our landmarks for future use. Below decks the Intelligence officers were assembling scale maps of the beach and shore-lines. Every bit of information available was being used, aërial photos taken by the Army and Navy Air Forces, reports from Australian traders who had visited the island in years past, and data gleaned from natives from nearby islands who were familiar with Okinawa geography.

As the map pictures came into focus, briefing began. The commander briefed the team; the officers and chiefs briefed their platoons, and we all briefed each other. We went over the entire operation beach by beach, strip by strip, section by section, foot by foot, until we knew all there was to know by heart and in the dark. Each man knew his exact assignment, the assignment of his platoon and the assignment of the team. Between briefings, we checked and rechecked our boats and swimming gear.

MARCH 29 was our first strike; it was a reconnaissance swim of Brown Beaches 1, 2, 3 and 4, plus extra strips two hundred yards wide north of Brown Beach 4 and south of Brown Beach 1. On either side of our posi-



tion, U.D.T.'s 16 and 21 went in to make similar surveys of sections of beach assigned as their part in this preliminary operation. On the other side of the island another strike was made as a feint to draw enemy attention away from us; a fourth U.D.T. outfit made a lusty splashing run on a selected beach. Supported by heavy fire from ships offshore, and carrier planes strafing and bombing, this team succeeded in keeping the local garrison occupied and away from our area. The ships and planes were serious, too; every bomb and shell was loosed with the fervent hope that it would release a few more Japs from combat duty.

All morning we studied our assignments, poring over our maps and charts. Every detail had to be committed to memory; you can't carry instruction sheets and road maps through choppy rolling salt water and read them with any degree of success, particularly if you have to keep ducking enemy fire from the shore. So we learned our lessons beforehand and learned as well the exact type and extent of the information we would be expected to bring back: specific data on the barrier reef, its distance from shore at given points, the depth of the water seaward, on top of and shoreward of the reef, and location of potholes and coral heads on top of the reef; location, number and type of man-made obstacles in the water along the shore; location, number and type of land obstacles on and just beyond the beach; location of landmarks, pillboxes and fortifications covering the beach; and the location, number and type of mines in the water offshore, plus anything else of interest.

After noon chow we checked our equipment aboard our LCP (R)'s and climbed into our swimming outfits—trunks, swim fins, goggles, slates and pencils attached to our belts, knives tied to our wrists, wrist compasses; .38 revolvers in shoulder holsters, and silver body paint to camouflage us against the choppy water. Men from Mars had nothing on us for grotesque appearance. We really believed that the Japs would have taken to the jungles if they could have seen us out of the water in full regalia. I personally doubted if the Shinto gods had prepared their worshipers for such operations.

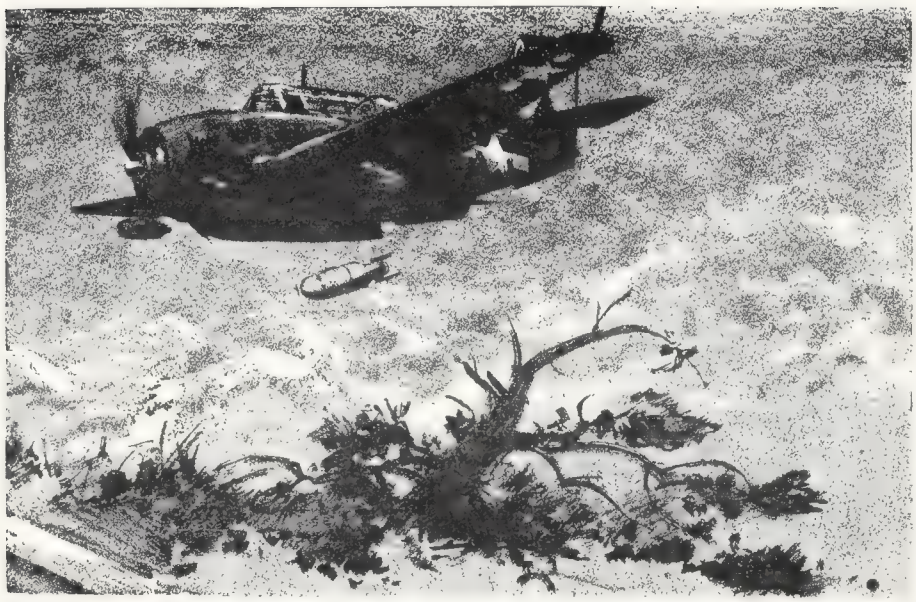
At 14:00 the ship's davit-handling crews took their stations; at 14:15 the UDT boat crews manned their boats; at 14:20 the UDT swimmers boarded the boats; at 14:40 the last boat was launched—and at 14:50 boat number 4 reported out of commission and loused up the whole schedule.

Boat No. 5 was readied to replace No. 4, and at 15:30, Roger Hour, we threaded through the destroyer line and headed for the beach. Behind us every ship in the fleet thundered, blasting the beach and shoreline with thousands of tons of hot steel; while overhead, fighters and dive bombers from the fleet carriers wheeled and dived, bombing and strafing with blazing guns and smoking rockets every Jap position they could locate or even suspect. In the wake of our small boats wheeled our own personal bodyguards, little LCI (G)'s, riding deep and heavy with the weight of their own guns and ammunition, following us into the reef line to stand ready for called fire from our own boats against troublesome shore batteries. It was the most magnificent and awe-inspiring spectacle I ever saw or expect to see or hear. The noise was so overpowering that I was in the water for several minutes before I was able to identify the incessant machine-gun fire in the background as the chattering of my own teeth—caused, no doubt, by the icy water.

At three minutes after Roger Hour all swimmers were in the water and heading into the beach. Beaches Brown 1 and 2 were covered by eight swimmers in the charge of one officer; Beach Brown 3 by six swimmers in the charge of one officer, and Beach Brown 4 and the area north by twelve swimmers in the charge of one officer. The men committed to Beaches Brown 1, 2 and 3 were from boat No. 1, which also carried our commanding officer, Lieutenant L. A. States. The men committed to Beach Brown 4 were from boat No. 2. In addition to these two boats, boat No. 5 was launched and stood by along the reef with thirteen reserve swimmers, two lifesavers, and a pharmacist's mate.

After all swimmers were in the water, orders were received to cover a gap north of Brown Beach 1 and south of the beaches covered by UDT 21. Lieutenant States then transferred from boat No. 1 to boat No. 5 to take charge and dropped off four swimmers in charge of one officer to fill the gap. Boat No. 1 had dropped its swimmers off three hundred yards from the reef, and boat No. 2 had dropped its swimmers about seven hundred yards from the reef. The final extra drop of reserve swimmers had covered the waterfront, and the boats retired to the LCI (G) line to drop off UDT and Army observers and to await the pick-up signal from the command ship.

In the water we started the long pull to the reef where operations really began. As we rode the tops of the long swells, we could see the narrow strip of beach outlined against the dark green of the jungle and rising beyond, the somber wooded hills of



*Our planes seemed determined to keep the Japs in their holes if bombs could do the trick.*

Okinawa. Here and there we could distinguish small buildings, and roads or trails leading down to the beach. The whole scene constantly jumped and shivered as the shells and bombs from the ships and planes poured in, hammering the shoreline until we couldn't believe that a Jap could be left alive to shoot at us. The smoke and dust of the explosions rose in a shifting, swirling cloud over the whole area and made it difficult to keep our landmarks in sight, and almost impossible to detect the location of gun emplacements in our line of vision.

One pair of swimmers had started at each end of our assigned section to swim the reef, one man swimming over the reef and noting depth of water, potholes and coral heads, and the other swimming seaward ten to fifteen yards observing water depths by diving to the bottom at intervals. Beyond the reef the men had divided into two-man teams to work their way to the water's edge. Some of the teams had reels, gallon cans soldered watertight and carrying weighted line, to measure water depth at intervals shoreward from the reef down the middle of the Brown Beach to which they were directed. The other men swam the flanks of the reel carriers, checking obstacles in the water, noting the timing and current of the surf, looking for captive or floating mines and noting shore obstacles and landmarks.

We worked for several minutes before we realized that we were being fired upon. The small splashes in the water near us had seemed no different from the wind-whipped whitecaps, until the Japs began throwing mortar shells. The din of the firing against the beach made it impossible for us to hear the Jap guns. Now we realized sickeningly that we were getting not only mortar fire, but sniper and machine-gun fire as well. The innocent-appearing little splashes were bullets hitting the water, and meant for us. The range was almost point blank. All of us were within fifty to sixty yards of the shore and the Jap guns at one time or another, the reef itself zigzagging in an uneven line along the shore at distances varying from fifty to seven hundred yards. We prayed for more fire from our ships, and our prayers were answered, the little LCI (G)'s particularly helping to keep down the near snipers and machine gunners by three-inch gun- and .20-mm. and .40-mm, fire into the beach right over our bobbing heads.

We worked faster than we had ever worked before, the bullets and mortar shells splashing around over our heads being only slightly more compelling than the icy water. I was swimming the reef with Ensign J. H. Park; and we both, as well as the rest of the men, were freezing by inches. It became increasingly difficult to log the information on our slates as our hands and legs grew numb and cramped. The zigzag course of the reef took us over several hundred yards, and the constant struggle to keep from being swept against the sharp coral took more extra effort than we could spare. We had been in the water an hour and fifteen minutes by the time we reached the end of our sector, diving and swimming with all we had every minute of the time. We made it just in time. Both of us had severe cramps in both legs, cramps that doubled our legs up and forced us to tread water with our arms, weighted down with the now useless swim fins, guns and knives. Minutes passed like hours as we waited, trying to keep from freezing, trying to keep from raising our arms in the distress signal, trying to straighten our legs against the pull of the tearing pain of the cramps. Our boats were on the way, but we were on the tail end of the pick-up line. The only thing that kept us going was the knowledge that the other men were equally in trouble and needed the boats as badly as we did. We hardly noticed by then that our ships and planes were still strafing the beach, or that the Japs were still shooting at us and our boats.

Somehow we held out until we were swept out of the water and over the side of an LCP (R) into a small heaven of brandy, hot coffee and blankets. Someone poured a two-ounce bottle of brandy down my throat before I hit the deck; and when I could stop shivering, I pulled a blanket around me, stretched out my aching legs and went to work on the coffee. Nothing ever tasted better than that brandy, and the coffee wasn't bad, either.

We chugged back to the *Kline*, baptized and battle-tested, chattering like monkeys in the excitement of accomplishing our first mission. Someone found an old mop aboard our LCP (R) and attached it to the flagholder as a symbol of victory. The cheers we got from the crews of the LCI (G)'s and destroyers as we swept proudly through their lines was sweet music, and the battered old mop remained ever after an emblem of achievement for UDT 11.

Back on board the *Kline* we were ushered as we were, dripping wet, greasy and dirty, into Intelligence. We stood there, silver from our grease paint, black from the oil in the water, dripping puddles on the deck, and gave all the information we had to the officers in the chartroom. Even after we had read all the information from our slates and racked our brains for personal observation, they fired questions at us for what seemed like hours. When they let us go, we ran for the showers and stood soaking up that fresh hot water, feeling grateful that we had joined the Navy instead of the Army.

By the time we had showered and dressed, Intelligence was ready for us again, this time with a full-scale map of the entire area we had covered. We went at it again, checking and verifying all the information they had logged on the map.

We guessed then that our beaches weren't to be used for the invasion —too many jutting coral heads and potholes in the reef, too many floating mines in the water, and too much deep water on the shore side of the reef. We had found no planted ob-

stacles, but the natural obstacles plus the deep water and rugged shore terrain argued against a troop landing in force.

Within an hour we were to find out how right our guess was.

Meanwhile the butler had announced that dinner was served, and we flooded into the messroom, our appetites, until now held dormant by the activities of the afternoon, growling and snapping at our heels.

We had suffered no casualties from the Jap fire, and except from a few coral scratches, were unharmed. We were in understandably high spirits, the talk and laughter flowing around and over us, with everyone talking and no one listening. We all had a good laugh at the really one humorous incident of the day: when the reserve swimmers had been sent into the water to plug up the gap noticed in the line at the start of the operation, Frank Jameson, without silver body paint and wearing a different type of goggles, had been the officer sent along in charge. Because of the delay in dropping these swimmers, their LCP (R) had gone in close to the reef and dropped them closer to the shore, so that they were in ahead of us. As we swam toward the reef from the sea, Jameson came swimming out from the reef. One of his fellow-officers, spotting his unpainted body and strange goggles, immediately concluded that Jap swimmers were coming out to engage us in hand-to-hand combat. With a yell we could all hear above the bombardment, he turned on his flippers and headed for the open sea, arms and legs beating the water to a froth. For about two hundred yards he broke every speed record in the books. Then curiosity cut through, and he stopped to see if he was being pursued. What he saw was Jameson, almost drowning. He had guessed the reason for the other's panic and pushed his goggles up so he could be recognized, but he was laughing so hard he couldn't swim. He floundered and flailed around choking and gasping as his erstwhile ally swam back to his side, and they turned back to the reef together.

The story was all over the fleet within twenty-four hours, losing nothing in the telling.

For our lack of casualties we gave most of the credit to the excellent and complete bombardment to the shore by our ships and airplanes; but we felt, too, that the Japs had been sur-

*Hastily gathering up our quota of Schantz packs floating around us, we struck out for the obstacles ahead.*

prised if not confused and bewildered by our strange method of approaching their beaches. The report of the battle and repulsed landing given by Tokyo Rose the previous evening may have been based on actual belief by the Jap garrisons ashore that the UDT swimmers were an invading force trying to establish a beachhead.

At 19:00 Lieutenant States called a huddle on the fantail of the *Kline* and gave us our orders for the next day, Love Day minus two, March 30. Together with UDT 16, we were to clear the beaches selected for the troop landings, Beaches Red 3 and Blue 1 and 2, of approximately twelve hundred obstacles. Roger Hour, or starting time, would be at at 09:30 in the morning.

We started immediately to prepare our demolition charges. Each charge consisted of one two-and-one-half block of Tetrytol. Around each block we wrapped a piece of prima-cord and tied it with a special demolition knot, leaving about two and one-half feet of cord to run from the block up to the master trunk-line. In addition to the prima-cord, each block was wrapped with a length of soft wire with ends dangling, to be used to fasten the charge to the obstacle. As each charge was completed, it was inserted in a "Schantz pack," a sort of fabric apron with four individual pockets to carry the charges. The Schantz pack was then tied to a flotation bladder and set aside ready for use in the morning. In addition to the fourteen hundred charges, dozens of fuses had to be wired, crimped and waterproofed. All the work had to be done in the small space afforded in the ammunition magazine. We took turns, officers and men together, working in the magazine for a while, then going topside for briefing on the demolition operation. These beaches were unfamiliar to us, and we studied the maps and charts like the crew of the *Santa Maria* looking for India.

Chartroom, powder magazine, then smoke, coffee, smoke, coffee, powder magazine, chartroom, remember, repeat, check, locate, smoke, coffee, until at three A.M. we finished and sacked in for the little time we had left. It was already dawning. Across the water we could hear the General Quarters bells of the near ships as they heralded the arrival of the first of the day's Kamikaze planes coming to pay the Emperor's respects to the American Fleet. For the first time we were allowed to sleep through General Quarters on our own ship.

UDT 11 was back on deck at 06:00 loading the boats, checking the engines and radios and getting swimming gear in order. Our half of the demolition assignment consisted of the north half of the area covered by the three beaches, comprising about six hundred and fifty yards of beach and an estimated six hundred obstacles. These obstacles were hardwood posts ten to twelve inches in diameter, pile-driven into the sand and coral, and interlaced and reinforced with barbed wire. The area assigned Team 16 was substantially the same. As the readying operation progressed, our planes could be heard diving and strafing the shore with machine-gun fire and rockets. Then the fleet moved in and the guns began pounding, harder and harder, faster and faster, until the sound of the planes was lost and the bombardment of the previous day paled by comparison.

As we finished our final briefing on team assignments and boarded the LCP (R)'s the record player on the *Kline* was playing a currently popular song, "I'll Be Seeing You." It sent such a wave of nostalgia through the men that for a few minutes they even stopped ribbing me about my swimming costume. As I made ready for the approaching swim, I had kept remembering the bitter cold water and the leg cramps of the previous day. Casting about for some method of reducing the chill of the water, I had decided to wear the top half of my long-handled woolen underwear. It would add some weight when wet, but it would take the edge off the cold. Naturally I created a sensation when

*Our operation slowed almost to a halt as bullets and shells thudded into the posts over our heads and splashed in the*

I came up on deck in my chaste garment and climbed into the boat. I could stand the ribbing if the idea worked as I hoped it would. The song, however, brought a welcome respite from the wisecracks, suggestions and invitations coming my way, and I will always remember it with great gratitude.

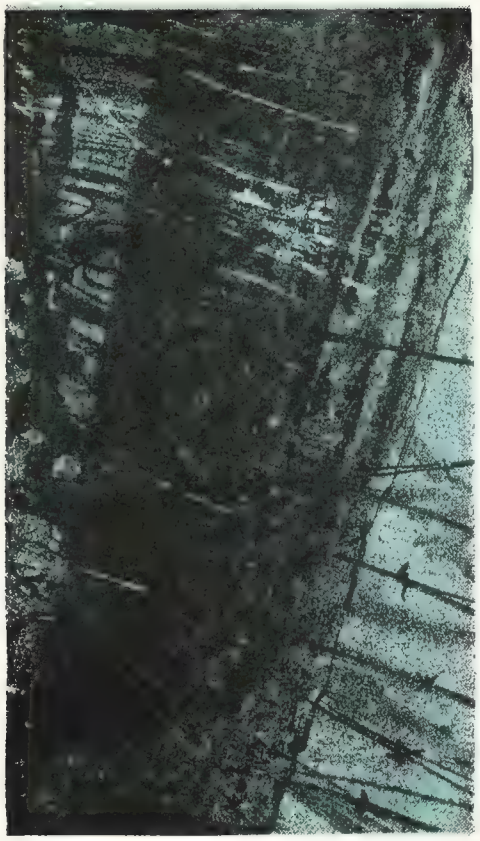
Two boats were going into the beach with demolition swimmers and one would stand by with a reserve crew in case of trouble. Boats Nos. 1 and 2 each carried three teams of seven swimmers including one officer or chief to a team. No. 4, the reserve boat, carried ten reserve swimmers. The first two boats also carried one UDT and one Marine Corps observer each and the third boat carried Lieutenant States, commanding the overall Team 11 operation.

At Roger Hour, 09:30, Boats 1 and 2 went through the destroyer-line toward the beach. As we went in the fire from the fleet increased until it reached a crescendo that threatened to split the very air and water around us. Straight ahead we went until the boats were within four hundred yards of the obstacles in the surf. Then the demolition packs went over the side and after them the swimmers, stringing out in groups at hundred-yard intervals as the course curved along the beach. As the wake of the boat flattened in the chill water we picked up our Schantz packs by the web straps trailing from the flotation bladders and kicked our flippers in the direction of the doomed sons of Nippon. Each swimmer except the trunk-line men towed five packs of charges of about fifty pounds of concentrated explosive. The trunk-line men, two crews of three men and one officer each, towed packs loaded with prima-cord to be used in stringing the master detonating line along the tops of the obstacles above the water line. Any stray or random shot hitting one of the charges or one of the prima-cord reels would have effectively blasted the careers of all the near swimmers, a fact of which we became increasingly and acutely aware as we neared our target.

The UDT 16 swimmers reached their unloading zone shortly before us, and we could see them enter their demolition area and begin work as we were nearing our obstacles. For some reason they had started some two hundred yards north of the beach center line marking the division of the area between Teams 11 and 16. But that was their problem and we concentrated on our own as sniper and machine fire began to reach out from the shore in our direction.

We fanned out in the water to reduce the size of the targets for the Japs. Their fire was getting hotter as we closed upon the beach. The obstacles were only about fifty to sixty yards from some of their pillboxes and machine-gun nests—almost point-blank range for a blind man. Several times I saw several bullet splashes in my immediate vicinity and thinking that I must be in the path of a fixed machine gun or automatic weapon of some sort I veered to the left. The splashes still followed, coming closer with each burst of fire. Then a small calm voice whispered in my ear: "Higgins, old boy, someone is shooting at *you!*" Zigzagging frantically, I swam near Norm Elliot, my buddy from Fort Pierce days, my pal of long standing. He reacted as if I were shoving a floating mine in his direction. Churning furiously away from me he yelled over his shoulder: "You so-and-so, get away from here with that damned white sweat shirt. Do you want to get us all killed?" That brought the dawn.

My cute idea for keeping warm was working wonderfully well. In fact, it was making things hotter than I had bargained for. If my teammates shunned me the Japs didn't. They were doing their best to let me know that my long underwear was a howling success in their book. For seconds I debated trying to disrobe in the water but I knew it was impossible. Even if I could accomplish the feat with all my hardware weighing me down, stopping for even a minute would leave a target even the Japs couldn't miss. The five packs of



*water around our obstacle shields.*

Tetrytol charges riding just aft of my stern clinched the argument. It was swim and be damned. If I could reach the nearest obstacle and keep hidden I might have a chance; and I made it, ducking and dodging, under water and out, praying and gasping for breath, jerking the Schantz packs erratically through the water.

The others all made it safely too and we all rested for a minute, clinging to the obstacle posts, letting the Schantz packs snag to a halt in the maze of barbed wire. Over our heads the fire support drummed a thunderous tattoo. Our ships and planes seemed determined to keep the Japs in their holes if shells and bombs could do the trick. The little LCI (G)'s lay in close behind us, their .20- and .40-mm. quads and .50-caliber machine guns pumping in perfect rhythm as they fired scant feet over our heads at the beach. Behind them the destroyers worked back and forth across their grid patterns, slamming three- and five-inch shells in arithmetical pattern into the jungle above the shoreline. Beyond the destroyers were the cruisers and battlewagons salvoing their six-, eight-, and sixteen-inch guns in great bursts of fire that made their land targets jump and quiver, erupting in clouds of dust and debris. The shells from the sixteen-inch guns sounded above the screaming, whining of the smaller shells, rumbling through the shattered air like runaway freight cars. Over all the F6F and TBM's from the carriers added their own individual tones to the murderous symphony, loosing their bombs, rockets and machine guns barely above the heads of the entrenched enemy. The sound of the Jap small arms and mortar fire was lost in the shuffle. We could only spot their positions by watching the splashes, like handfuls of pebbles tossed in the water around us.

We began our demolition operation with the trunk-line crews starting, one at either end of our beach, to string prima-cord along the tops of the posts. Each post had to be attached individually to the trunkline so that the connecting line from the charge at the base could be tied in. All swimmers except those on the trunk-line detail worked at the task of fixing the charges at the bases of the obstacle posts and running the prima-cord leads up to the trunk-line above. To avoid fire from shore all crossing from post to post was done under water. Swimmers came up to breathe only when safely behind a post. The pattern had been drilled into us by many months of rehearsal: dive to the bottom of the post, fix the charge with the soft metal wire twisted around the post, surface behind the post with the prima-cord lead, tie the lead into the trunk-line, dive under water to the next post and repeat, repeat until all posts were tied and all charges were connected to the trunk-line. Charges properly placed would throw the obstacles into the laps of the Japs on the beach.

The center line dividing our stretch of beach from that assigned UDT 16 was marked by the burial vaults of the Okinawa natives in the low cliffs above the shore line. These vaults had been dug into the faces of the cliffs for countless ages and were clearly visible from the beach. In addition to serving us as markers they were serving the Japs as machine-gun and sniper nests and undoubtedly would have provided excellent box seats for observing our operations had our protective fire been less efficient. We had noted these markers before, particularly when UDT 16 had started work two hundred yards off the center. While watching them for fire during our operations we had also noted that Team 16 had pulled out to sea within minutes after we began placing charges. Since we prided ourselves on our own speed in action we could only conclude that something had gone radically wrong in their area. Speculation ran through our minds as we worked, fixing the charges and tying in, diving and swimming, fighting the roll of the surf to keep from being smashed against the posts or cut and slashed by the barbed wire.

At 10:30 we were finished and swimming back to our boats, artful dodger Higgins still trying to keep his white underwear from offering too tempting a target to the Jap snipers. At 10:35 we were safely aboard the LCP (R)'s, all except for one officer and one man from each of the trunk-line crews standing by on the reef as "trigger men," awaiting the order from the Commander, Underwater Demolition Teams, to fire. A check by officers and chiefs in charge of the crews laying charges indicated that about four hundred charges had been laid along four hundred yards of beach. The other two hundred and fifty yards of beach had been openings left by the Japs to provide channels for their own boats.

When the firing signal was given, Boat No. 1 closed the reef and picked up the firing party. At 10:43 the charges detonated. Observers reported that all of the obstacles in the UDT 11 area had been demolished but that few if any of the charges in the UDT 16 area had detonated. This confirmed our suspicion that something had gone wrong with Team 16 after they reached their objective.

Boats Nos. 1 and 2 returned to the U.S.S. *Kline* immediately but the reserve boat, No. 4, was dispatched to locate and mark three shoal-water areas in the vicinity south of Brown Beach No. 4, two LCI (G)'s were sent along as convoy and together with a cruiser stationed in the area gave the men cover fire as they marked the shoals, two of them with buoys and the third with a stranded piece of minesweeping gear flying a red flag. They finished by 14:00 and shortly thereafter were back aboard the *Kline* with UDT 11 still intact.

As on the day before, we reported to Intelligence immediately after boarding the ship. We were dirty and greasy from the débris and slime in the water churned up by the mortar shells, but as before we stood there and dripped as we gave reports and observations on the shore terrain, the Jap shore pillboxes and fortifications, and other items of interest to those who would direct troop landings within the next forty-eight hours.

After the Intelligence reports we were excused and scrambled for the showers. Under the soothing, relaxing flow of water we talked about the events of the day. The excitement of the previous day was gone; we were veterans now, and we discussed the success of our own operation, the questionable success of my white wool underwear which I swore under pain of capital punishment never to wear again, and the fact that few of us had

suffered muscle cramps from the icy water, a circumstance we credited to the long exposure of the day before and to the shorter length of time in the water on this mission.

Particularly we felt sorry for the men of UDT 16 for the failure of their operation. We had heard via scuttlebutt after boarding the *Kline,* that two of their men had been shot through the head by snipers almost immediately upon entering the obstacle area. While this might have been due to carelessness in exposing themselves to enemy fire, it still should not have caused the team to break and leave their assignment, which it apparently had. Nevertheless we felt sorry for them and hoped that there was a better, more understandable reason for their failure.

We had noon chow and retired to our bunks, trying to get some rest. We got very little. Our ship was underway, squirming, dodging and turning as the entire bay came under the heaviest Kamikaze attack so far. The Japs knew by now that plans were underway for an invasion of Okinawa —and were doing their damnedest to put as many ships out of commission as possible. The General Quarters bell rang constantly until night, eliminating any possibility of sleep. So we just smoked and talked. We knew that our skipper, Lieutenant States, had gone over to the invasion control ship, the U.S.S. *Estes,* and wondered what new assignment was coming up. We wondered until about five o'clock. Lieutenant States didn't return then but we got the word on our next operation: we were to return to Beaches Blue 1 and Blue 2 on the next day to complete the demolition of the obstacles which UDT 16 had failed to remove; Roger Hour was set for 09:00.

Our sympathy for UDT 16 hit a zero reading at that point. Going in on the same beaches for the third straight day was asking for it, and we knew it. By now the Nips had had time to familiarize themselves with our style and method of operation and would be ready and waiting, knowing that we would have to make another attempt to clear the remainder of the landing beach of obstacles. We had expected Team 16 to clear up their own detail and it was a shock to find we had been handed the hot potato.

Before our resentment got too hot Team 16's officers came aboard to brief us on their beaches. They were such wonderful guys and so obviously sorry and apologetic about the whole thing that we couldn't stay mad. Besides we had too much work to do. In addition to the long briefing sessions there were a thousand charges to be made up together with the fuses, prima-cord lines and detonators. We ran out of flotation bladders and had to use lifebelts to carry the Schantz packs. We had to go over our boats and check our operational gear. The pattern followed that of the night before. It was after midnight when we finished, tired, full of strong black coffee, and stuffy from too many cigarettes. From midnight until 02:00 we went over the entire schedule with the boat and swimming crews who would be in action in the morning. The 3rd platoon had been split in half with Frank Jameson taking half and I, as an acting Chief, taking the other half. Our men were all good men, well trained and fire hardened by now, but so great was our anxiety over the next day's work that we didn't even try to sleep. We drank more coffee and smoked more cigarettes until dawn and then went on deck, watching the fight against the Kamikazes overhead and trying to hold down the mounting tension. A few did hit their sacks and were excused from General Quarters as the Kamikaze attacks mounted.

Breakfast was oatmeal, and it nauseated me to look at it. Believing that the coffee and cigarettes were responsible, I went back on deck to see that everything was in order and ready to go.

At 08:15 Lieutenant States returned to the U.S.S. *Kline* and gathered the team on the fantail for a last-minute message from the Commander of the UDT's. We sat and stood around in our swimming trunks, swim fins and goggles as we heard something we already knew: this job had to be done! Troop landings in force were scheduled for the following morning April 1, Love Day, Easter Sunday. The beaches had to be open!

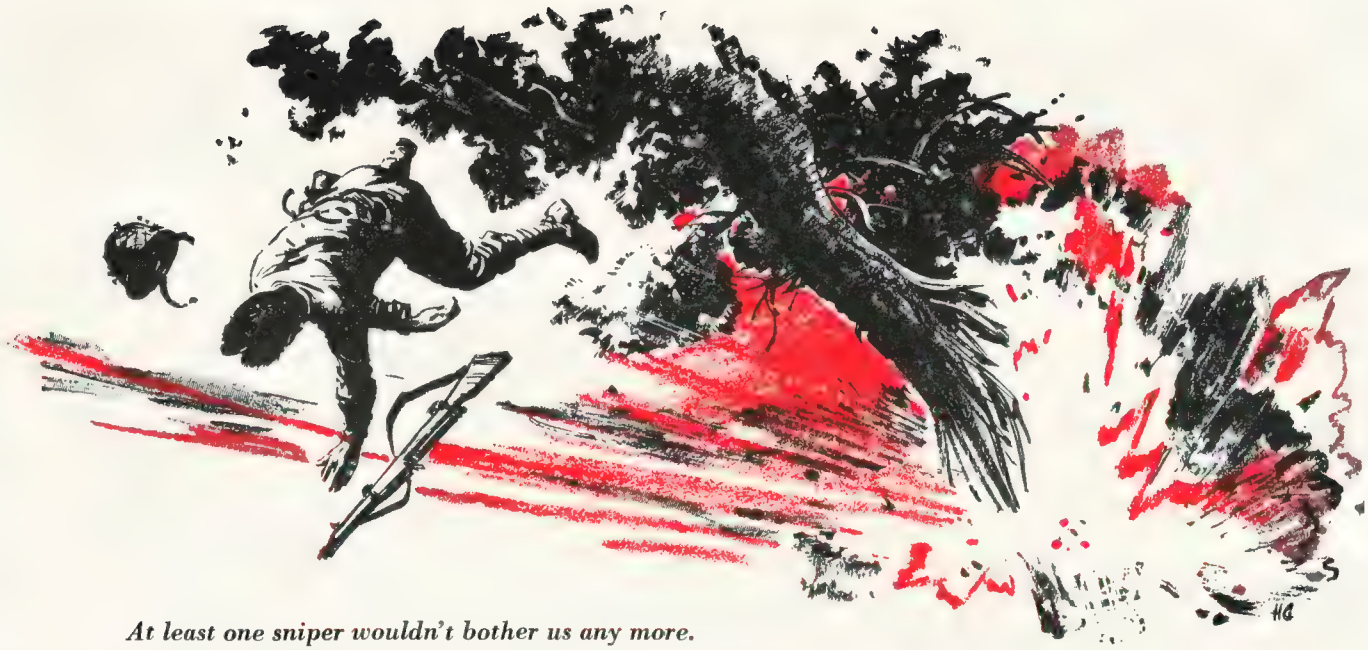
Ten minutes after Lieutenant States finished talking the boats were lowered and we went over the side.

As on the previous day the barrage from the ships and carrier planes was tremendous. We moved in under what seemed a solid blanket of fire, shells screaming, shrieking and rumbling over our heads toward the beach. The Japs, too, seemed to realize the importance of our final demolition assault. Their fire was heavier than before, and they had added heavier guns to the machine guns and mortars. In the caves above the beach we could see light artillery mounted on tracks running in and out as they returned the fire from the ships. Their snipers and automatic weapons men were either more numerous or braver than they had been before; splashes were kicking up around our boats as we dropped into the ocean three to five hundred yards offshore. Hastily gathering up our quota of Schantz packs floating around us, we struck out for the obstacles ahead. Around me heads were bobbing and ducking in the water as the men dived and surfaced in evasive action against the Jap gunners firing from the trees and cliffs on the shore.

Behind us the LCP (R)'s stayed in close rather than behind the LCI (G) line as was their usual pattern. The Commanding Officer of UDT 16 was in the No. 4 Boat with our C.O., and each of the other boats carried an officer observer from UDT 16. We had to admit that the Team 16 officers, having fouled out on their own time at bat, were doing all in their power to help us finish the job. The small LCP (R)'s, including Boat No. 5 carrying ten reserve swimmers, stayed out in the open exposed to enemy guns during the entire time we were mining the obstacles. Just knowing they were backing us up, deliberately exposing themselves, and calling for spot fire against Jap strongholds harassing us, helped make our job easier.

There were forty men including six officers in the water as we closed the obstacles. The assignments duplicated those of yesterday, with the trunk-line crews starting to string prima-cord from opposite ends of the beach toward the center and the rest working with the charges and obstacles. The trunk-line crews ran into trouble right at the start. A few gaps had been blown in the obstacles patterns the day before and the extra swimming required more time than we had anticipated. Otherwise we worked as before, hiding behind the posts when we surfaced, diving between posts, fighting the undertow of the surf that constantly tried to bash our brains out against the posts or to ensnare us in the maze of barbed wire. Enemy fire had diminished as we reached our destination and for some forty-five minutes, our naval and airplane bombardment had kept enemy activity to a minimum. From 09:30 on, however, Japs were moving about in the area of the burial vaults. Taking advantage of a lull in our own bombardment, they began to pour fire around our heads. Snipers, machine guns, mortars and the small-track guns in the caves opened up with a vengeance.

Our operation slowed almost to a halt as bullets and shells thudded into the posts over our heads and splashed in the water around our obstacle shields. It was too cold to keep still and too hot to move—so we did both, moved because we had to and held still because moving meant drawing enemy fire. Behind us Boat No. 4, carrying the skippers of Teams 16 and 11 was having trouble of its own. It had been patrolling the beach as close as water depth would permit



*At least one sniper wouldn't bother us any more.*

and offered a nice fat tempting target for the Jap gunners. Lieutenant States immediately radioed for heavier support fire from the fleet to cover an area 100 to 150 yards inland along the entire operational area. For the next twenty minutes all hell broke loose. The whole beach blew sky high. Rocks, trees, sand and earth filled the air and blotted out the sun. One five-inch shell clipped a tree growing near the beach. As the tree separated about halfway up the trunk we could see a body blown from the upper branches describe a crazy cartwheel and fall into the dust and débris below. At least one sniper wouldn't bother us any more.

The increased fire enabled us to resume work on schedule and we wrapped the job up. At Roger plus 87, 10:27, the charge tie-in's and the trunk-line connections had been double checked by Allen Hopper and Art Golden of the trunk-line crews, and all swimmers had been picked up by the LCP (R)'s except the firing parties standing by for the command to fire. Snipers were still firing and splashes could be seen around the trigger men in the water.

At Roger plus 100, 10:40, the charges were detonated. LCP (R) 4 immediately patrolled the area, reporting to the Commander, Underwater Demolition Teams, that substantially all obstacles had been demolished, the five or six posts that remained constituting no hazard to landing craft or tanks. In this operation over a thousand charges were carried to the obstacles and all had been detonated. In addition fifty or more others salvaged from the previous day's work had been tied in and used. Combined with the previous day's work UDT 11 had cleared some thirteen hundred yards of beach of nearly 1400 obstacles. The fact that we had suffered no casualties seemed almost miraculous. Three factors were given credit for this: we had been covered by accurate and intense fire from our ships and planes, we had kept undercover of the obstacles while working, and last but most appreciated, the Japs were incredibly lousy marksmen.

In spite of the success of our demolition I was far from happy. The last several minutes in the water, I had been bothered by near nausea and intermittent stomach cramps. Believing that the coffee, cigarettes, tension and lack of sleep of the past few days were responsible I had not worried particularly and had kept working until the job was finished. The swim back to the boats was rough as the cramps increased and I choked to keep from adding the meager contents of my stomach to the already fouled water. As I flipped into the rubber boat and climbed over the side of the LCP (R) I knew I was about finished. The boat crew grabbed me, pulled me in, and shoved the standard two-ounce bottle of brandy into my eager hands. It was no go. The smell of the usually welcome liquid almost turned me inside out.

For the first time it occurred to me that my trouble was serious. Any time I couldn't enjoy a drink of brandy after an hour and a half in ice-cold water, something was wrong. The small calm voice that had whispered in my ear about the shooting during the long-underwear episode spoke again: "This is the end, Higgins. Any time you refuse a drink, old boy, you're finished. Lie down now and lie quietly. The others have work to do." I took the advice and slipped quietly to the deck, where the nausea and cramps took complete control. I remember being covered with foul weather gear and held against the roll of the boat as we headed for the U.S.S. *Kline*. The next thing I knew I was being helped over the rail of the ship, and a Navy doctor was standing by as they eased me down into sick bay. I lay there with my trunks on, my knife dangling from the cord tied to my wrist, my goggles hanging awry from my neck. My swim fins had been taken off somewhere along the line. Consciousness came and went, and I cared little whether I died or not. I knew that the doc was taking a blood count and then I heard him say: "Appendicitis, emergency operation."

Then I was going over the side again—this time in a basket stretcher being lowered into one of the small operational boats. I came to as they were hoisting me over the side of the control ship. The doc was still with me, giving orders to the handling crew as they took me aboard. To the pain and nausea still with me, was added the shock and letdown from the tension of the hours past. Dimly I realized that the ship's operating room was going full blast with the doctors and hospital corpsmen working at top speed on men from ships hit by Kamikaze planes. They rolled me out of the basket onto a blanket on the floor; the operating tables were all full. I felt my swimming trunks being stripped off and my knife and goggles being removed. Then a needle punctured my skin for a spinal anesthetic and I blacked out again, wondering hazily if I would ever wake up.

**Another exciting chapter in the history of Underwater Demolition Team No. 11 will appear in our forthcoming August issue.**

TENNIS CAN BE SOMETHING BESIDES BATTING A BALL BACK AND FORTH—CAN INVOLVE MONEY AND A JOB.

*by* JOEL REEVE

*Illustrated by* L. R. GUSTAVSON

# Apes Could

FROM the moment the interview started, Red Norwalk was bothered by the resemblance of J. Perry Palmer to someone he knew. He kept trying to remember as he listened.

J. Perry Palmer sat behind an unnecessarily huge desk and barked: "This city has two sporting-goods houses. Ours was first. Started it myself. Then that Tanner came in and began cuttin' my throat. Now his whippersnapper son figures to win the tennis championship out at Hilldale and go to the Nationals and get more publicity for them."

Red suddenly remembered. Bushman! In the Chicago Zoo, Lincoln Park. He had taken Susan out there for laughs and they had lingered to watch the huge ape. Bushman's head indubitably came to a point. So did J. Perry Palmer's head.

"What's funny?" demanded the old man, bristling. "You won't find it funny. You'll have trouble enough gettin' in shape to beat this Tommy Tanner. Oh, he's good. I watch him every week-end. Give up my golf to watch. Tennis! Hate the game! Apes could learn to play tennis!"

Red Norwalk's eyes widened. He was a sandy-haired, lanky man in his thirties.

"Apes, did you say?"

"Certainly. Bat a silly ball back and forth. Bah!" The old man lit a cigar. "You! Spendin' your life bein' a tennis bum. What did it ever getcha?"

"A job," Red pointed out. "You're giving me a job."

"You're all I could get," said J. Perry sourly. "The good players already got jobs. And if you don't beat Tommy Tanner, you haven't got a job."

Red Norwalk said quietly: "And if I do?"

The beetled brows twisted. "You've beat yourself down with playin'. And booze. Don't try to lie. You went the route, Norwalk. Your girl gave you the air and you hit the skids. Played the society game—tried to. You failed. I'm givin' you a chance to get hold of yourself. Beat Tanner. Train yourself back into shape. Then *you'll* go back to the Nationals."

"So what?"

"So you'll be worth something to me."

"Head of the sales department?" asked Norwalk. "A decent chance in the town?"

"Head— Are you nuts?"

The lean man rose. He shook his head. "Get yourself an ape, Palmer."

The cigar stuck straight into the air. Palmer's voice was harsh and angry. "Now wait. Okay. I'll gamble. God knows the department is— Never mind. Maybe there's something in you. Once you were good—maybe you got something left. Beat Tanner, make a showing in the Nationals and you got the job."

RED was on the verge of asking for something in writing. Then he shrugged. He had played enough poker to know when not to shove a bluff too far. "Agreed. I'll start today at the club if you don't mind and report to work tomorrow morning."

"Take all the time to get in shape you need," grunted Palmer. "Just so you beat that sissy, that upstart, that Tommy Tanner."

It was a fine club, with a beautiful golf layout and six clay courts. It even had a swimming pool. Hilldale was a large city off the beaten track of the big tennis tours, but lately the game had caught hold, Red Norwalk found immediately. The pro, an aging Scot named Fergus MacNab, was busy giving a lesson to a very pretty girl.

On his way to the bang-board, Red paused to watch. The girl looked a bit like Susan Pauley. Not as beautiful, but just as slim and graceful. Only this girl's tennis form was in the embryo stage, and she was laughing at herself. Susan had not been able to laugh in a long while, not when Red was around.

# Play Tennis

MacNab said to her: "Miss Palmer, ye got to follow through—"

"Or Tommy Tanner will never speak to me again?" she said gayly.

Red walked out on the court. He asked, grinning in his time-proven winning way: "Pardon me—are you J. Perry Palmer's daughter?"

"Why—yes. I'm Mary Palmer."

Red turned the grin on MacNab. "I'm Norwalk. Can I help?"

MacNab said: "Red Norwalk, is it? We-ell. If ye'll go over and hit back, methinks I might work alongside her and correct that swing-through a wee bit."

Red went across the net from the girl. His mind was working like a busy little behive. Mary Palmer—Tommy Tanner. So the old man had been holding back something. It was not only the sporting-goods business—it was *Montagu* and *Capulet*.

He spent the next hour in the hot sun chasing ill-hit balls, sending them gently back to forehand or backhand as MacNab directed. He got to sweating, and his legs hurt a little.

J. Perry Palmer had him dead to rights, of course. Last season he had merely gone through the motions. He had used a lot of the gravy-train money to drink cool ones in the clubhouses. He had gone down into the depths, and nothing had mattered after Susan had forced him to face his future.

He was a washed-up tennis bum. He had lasted too long to be any good against the young pros. Teaching was not his forte—he never had the patience to teach. One after another his moneyed friends, upon whom he had subconsciously counted for a job, had dropped him for new heroes.

Now he was—still a hired tennis player. He grimaced, wiping sweat from his brow. A voice near by said, "Hey, can I take over?"

He turned and looked at a slim, straight-backed youth with a serious, rather ugly face and bright blue eyes.

"It's all right," Red said. "I'm Norwalk; I'm getting into shape."

"I'm Tommy Tanner." The youth did not offer to shake hands; neither did he scowl. "I heard you were in town."

Red turned on the grin. "You look fit. Glad to meet you, Tanner. We ought to have a good tournament."

The youth nodded: "I *will* take over here, if you don't mind."

Red shrugged. "My duties don't include spying on you and the boss' daughter; that's for sure. See you later, Tanner."

He wanted to go in and take a cool drink. He wanted to lie down and relax. He stood a moment watching the girl and boy meet at the net and lean toward each other, speaking in low tones, glancing at him. He knew in that moment that there were great forces aligned against him. MacNab was joining in their talk. A couple of club members strolled past, and Mary Palmer called them over, and they too put their heads into the huddle.

They would be indignant; it was natural. The whole club would be on the side of young love, of course. J. Perry was not a man to inspire affection among his fellow-men. Red Norwalk made his way toward the bangboard.

He was cast as the villain; that was plain. And not even the leading villain—just a minor heavy hired by the lead in the melodrama. Nobody was going to like him in Hilldale.

He beat the ball against the board. He stroked viciously, disliking himself, J. Perry Palmer, the sunshine which was overheating him, and the whole world. . . .

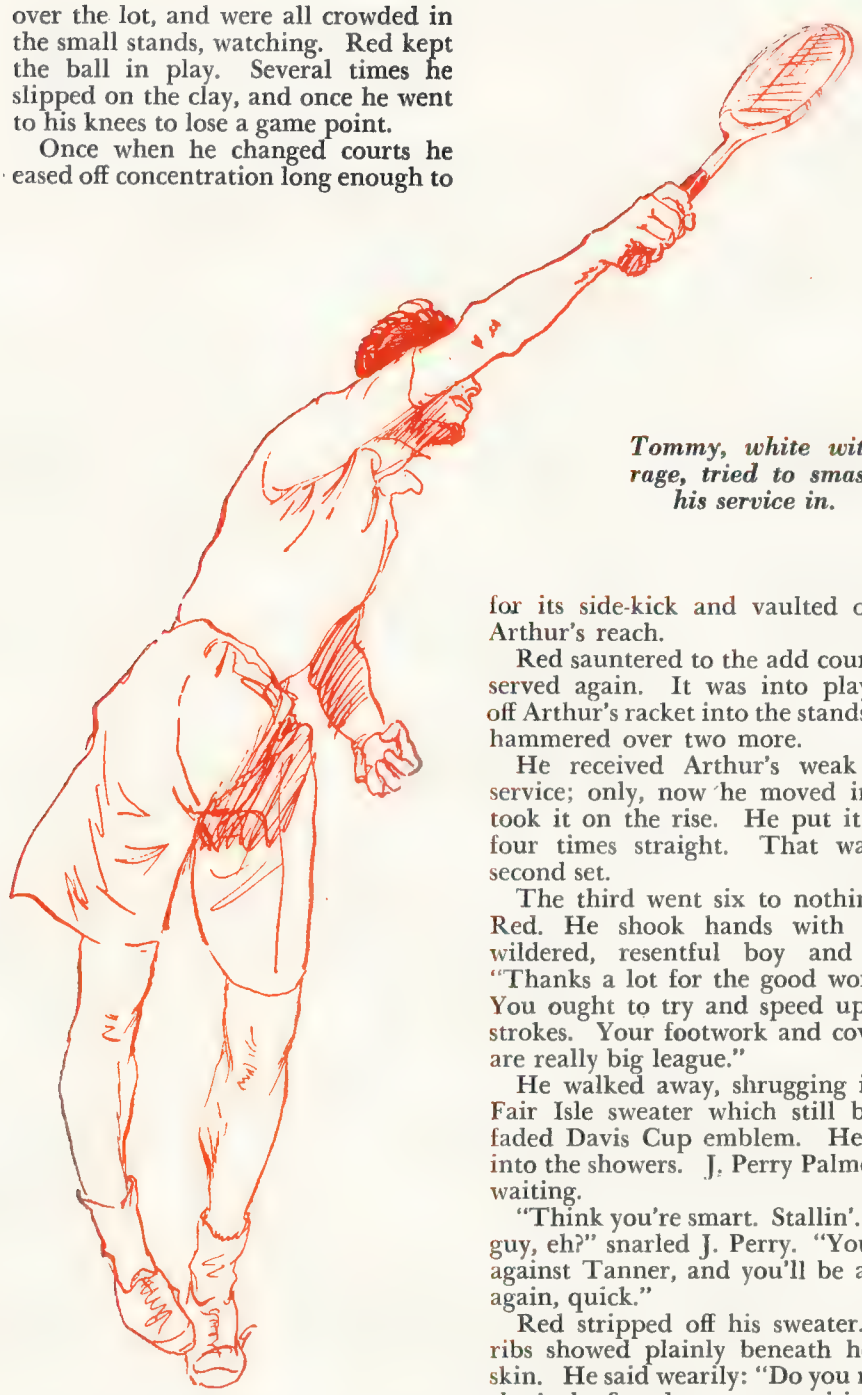
In the third round of the Hilldale Tournament, Red Norwalk drew a chunky lad named Les Arthur, and this boy was a getter. He had no ground game, no overhead, nothing except the ability to run and knock the ball back into play. Anything other than a dead placement ace, and Arthur would return it.

Red knocked them back. Playing with utmost caution, he managed to keep the ball where Arthur could get to it. The first set went five all; then Arthur began taking wild chances and making them good. Red lost, 7-5.

The second set started out the same. The crowd had deserted Tommy Tanner, who was belting his opponent all

over the lot, and were all crowded in the small stands, watching. Red kept the ball in play. Several times he slipped on the clay, and once he went to his knees to lose a game point.

Once when he changed courts he eased off concentration long enough to find J. Perry Palmer in the crowd. He almost got a cramp from suppressing a belly-laugh at sight of the sporting-goods magnate's face.



*Tommy, white with rage, tried to smash his service in.*

The Arthur boy, a close friend of Tommy Tanner, was away over his head, knocking the ball deeper than he had ever dared. Red moved from one corner to the other, playing the ball, never trying to be smart, just knocking it back. Games went to four-all. It was his service.

He paused a moment, taking deep breaths. His wind had become as good as ever. He was very proud of his ability to run without panting like a hound on the scent. He threw up a ball and hit it with seeming negligence. The service bit in, took clay for its side-kick and vaulted out of Arthur's reach.

Red sauntered to the add court and served again. It was into play and off Arthur's racket into the stands. He hammered over two more.

He received Arthur's weak spin-service; only, now he moved in and took it on the rise. He put it away four times straight. That was the second set.

The third went six to nothing for Red. He shook hands with a bewildered, resentful boy and said: "Thanks a lot for the good workout. You ought to try and speed up your strokes. Your footwork and coverage are really big league."

He walked away, shrugging into a Fair Isle sweater which still bore a faded Davis Cup emblem. He went into the showers. J. Perry Palmer was waiting.

"Think you're smart. Stallin'. Wise guy, eh?" snarled J. Perry. "You stall against Tanner, and you'll be a bum again, quick."

Red stripped off his sweater. His ribs showed plainly beneath healthy skin. He said wearily: "Do you realize that's the first decent competition I've had since I came here a month ago?"

"Nonsense. Been playin' with MacNab. Practicin' on that stupid board. What more you need?"

Red sighed. No use to explain to this ogre that MacNab was a fierce adherent of the Tommy-Mary side, and too old anyhow to provide real competition. Palmer would get the Scot fired. No use to complain that because of Palmer's unpopularity, no decent player around Hilldale would give Red a match. Palmer was so accustomed to being a pariah that he never thought of it as a handicap. Red surveyed his boss, struck with this thought.

"What do you get out of life?" he asked curiously. "Just money? A round of golf, playing against bogie? Tell me, J. Perry, do you like music? Books? Do you collect stamps?"

When Palmer bristled, he bristled all over. Like Bushman, Red thought again.

Red said: "Never mind. I'm working for you. This Tommy is a helluva good kid player. Serious and steady. He might even make the big time, if he worked at it, played good men every day. I'm pretty old, and I'm out of practice. But I can take him."

J. Perry Palmer stopped looking like a thunderstorm about to precipitate itself for a moment. "You can? You're sure?"

"I can let him beat himself," explained Red. "I bought that. I gave my blood and sweat to get my wind and legs back. That's what I learned this afternoon."

"It sounds complicated," growled Palmer.

"I can play the ape," mocked Red. "Run and knock it back. A young, inexperienced player will get overeager, and start beating the ball out of court."

J. Perry Palmer grated: "Don't make fun of me, Norwalk—I'm warnin' you. There's things about you I don't like. Keep on the way you're goin', and the job I promised you won't get you anything but fired when you don't make good."

"Do you think I haven't figured that out for myself?" asked Red sweetly. "Before the finals between Tommy Tanner and me, there will be a contract drawn. By my lawyer. You'll sign it."

"Why, you—you broken-down tennis bum—"

"A year at decent pay," nodded Red. "Or I default."

"You—you—"

But Red was gone to the showers. He could only stand so much of Palmer's sputtering invective. He wondered often how it would be to punch Bushman Jr. right on the nose.

In his month around the Hilldale Club he had learned a lot of things. He had found out about Mary and Tommy, how they had always known each other, always been a team. He had ascertained that although J. Perry was the pioneer in sporting goods in Hilldale, that his methods and prices had been suspect on all sides even before Tanner Company opened its doors.

He had learned that Tommy Tanner's father was a decent sort, not too sharp but well-liked, and able to give Palmer a fight merely by being fair in his dealings. The real money was in outfitting the schools and athletic clubs, and in stocking outlets in the county, small stores; and Tanner, Sr., got along better with people. But Palmer had the solid lines of mer-

chandise tied up and would cut throats if necessary to get business. It was pretty even, Red found, between the two adversaries.

There was enough business for both. This was what made for hours of thought by Red Norwalk. This was what brought it back to Mary Palmer and Tommy Tanner.

When he came out of the showers, Tommy Tanner was dressing in a corner far removed from Red's locker. The two looked at one another, glanced away. Red wrapped the towel about his lean middle and went over to where the blue-eyed youth was tying his necktie.

"Mind talking to me a minute?"

Tanner flushed. "Well—no, I don't mind."

Red glanced around. "My locker is sort of strategic."

He went down to the inconvenient corner where he had been assigned and put on some clothing. In a moment Tanner was standing beside him, frowning.

Red said: "Never had a chance to talk to you. Naturally." He grinned in his old manner.

Tanner said uneasily: "There's been no reason to talk."

Red bent to tie a shoelace. "Maybe not. I can see your side, of course." He straightened and looked into the blue eyes. "But I've been wondering just how you feel about things."

"You ought to know by now—"

Red shook his head. "Uh-uh. I mean about everything. About Mary Palmer and going to the Nationals and what then?"

*This girl was laughing at herself.*

Tanner said: "Norwalk, I don't get this. I don't know what you mean. If you're trying any tricks, they won't work."

"Youth. Fierceness," sighed Red. "Determination. Well—I tried."

Tanner started away, then hesitated. "I'm going to beat you. I know how, and I can do it. I'm sorry if it costs you a job. But the way you got the job wasn't very nice."

Red said gently: "I didn't know the real deal when I took it. And I need a job very bad. I'm not apologizing, not even explaining, Tanner. I'm just curious about you and that nice girl."

"It's none of your business." Tanner bit his lip. Again he started away but could not quite leave. "What do you mean?"

"You haven't enough money to be a tournament player," said Red bluntly. "You've got to do like the rest, get expenses. That means certain compromises. You and Mary won't be able to get married. J. Perry will cut her off; you know that. Do you intend following the tennis circus?"

"I haven't decided," said Tanner, uncertainty in his voice.

"I've watched you," nodded Red. "It's in you. The bug. You love it. And you've got everything it takes. You could make good, over a period of time."

"How much time?" asked Tanner eagerly.

"You see? Brother, you're ready." Red tied his other shoe. "The good old game of tennis. Amateurs all—taking expenses to show their wares to the people who support the game."

"Are you trying to lecture me? *You?*" Tanner laughed.

"Nope. I'm not trying anything. Just always was nosey," said Red. He stood up. They were the same size, same build, the two of them eying each other in the locker room. "I like that Mary. She reminds me of someone. . . . Okay, Tanner. You're going to beat me and be a big tennis player."

He turned his back on the younger man, reaching for his jacket. When he had buttoned it, Tanner was gone, and Red could hear his heels clicking indignantly upon the concrete floor of the locker room.

It was a sunny day, too hot for Red Norwalk's comfort. The tennis devotees of Hilldale crowded the club, and when the finalists took the court, there was little room beyond the baselines for maneuvering.

The linesmen, the umpire and the crowd were for Tommy Tanner. Everyone is human, Red thought grimly; and although there would be no downright cheating, the close calls would inevitably go against him. He rallied with a grim Tommy, and noted that there was a spot in the clay on the south side which was slightly soft from the morning's hosing down. He could use that spot for spin shots which would not bounce.

He seemed preoccupied as he shucked his sweater and spun for serv-

*Red was everywhere, seemingly, without effort.*

ice. He won and took the north court and stood waiting. The umpire made his introductions, and Tommy got a big hand. Not even J. Perry Palmer applauded for Red Norwalk.

He took his position and bounced a ball. The umpire said "Play," and he threw up a ball and hit it. His service was good, a near-acing shot, but Tommy got it and knocked it back down the line, a sizzling return. At that instant Red realized he was in a terrific match.

The feeling persisted even when he held and changed courts. Tommy had a big kick-service, and it bothered him because Red had not looked at a decent serve for a year. He kept overdriving. Tommy also held.

Red served again. Remaining in back-court, he began cutting the corners, then mixing it up with a drop-shot. He got Tommy on the run and kept him there.

But Tommy stormed the net. And when he did, he decanted shots which Red simply could not get. Tommy broke Red's service.

And then Red simply could not get up. This boy was even better than he had believed. He stayed back and used every trick he knew, and Red knew them all. He softened up, then switched to driving, then slowed down again. Tommy met him with uncompromising, blasting tennis.

The first set went 6-4 to Tommy. The second went 10-8 to Red. The third was ding-dong and crack the bell, until Tommy ran it out, 11-9.

RED's knees shook as he walked to the dressing-room. He showered rapidly and changed to dry clothes; and J. Perry Palmer came in and stood above him as he lay in his corner alone.

Red said: "Go away."

"Thought you could beat him. Thought he'd beat himself!"

Red said: "I could be wrong. So I was wrong."

J. Perry said: "It ain't possible. A kid like that. If you weren't in shape—but you are. I'll give you that."

Red sat up. "Don't give me a damned thing. I don't want anything from you as a gift." His voice was as sharp and ugly as the older man's. "Get the hell out of here and let me alone."

J. Perry Palmer bit at a cigar. "I wonder if you've got anything left. I just wonder, that's all." He turned and stomped off.

Red lay and thought about things. Then he got up and went back to the war.

Tanner was fresh and eager as a beaver with winter closing in and the dam half-built. He started off at top speed, slamming the ball to all corners of the court.

Red stayed back. He kept running, kept playing the lines. He got a few close calls which were bad for him, but he never questioned them, expecting the worst of it. He fought off game points until his tongue almost hung out.

He held service, and it went five-all, and he took fresh balls to service position. He had been using a slice to save strength during this set, and Tommy hadn't been able to smother it. He lazily tossed one up now and suddenly slugged into it.

He got an ace. Immediately he went back to the slice. He twisted it into play and took the return. Tommy crashed the next one and rushed the net. Red lofted a lob. It was not deep enough, and Tommy blasted his overhead.

Red went back and back. His legs ached, but he got the bounce and lobbed again. Tommy smashed. Red lobbed. Tommy missed.

Red won the game.

Frowning, Tommy lashed at his service. He faulted and put the second to backhand. Red drove cross-court. Sensing the line of Tommy's return, he began to move. He slid to the net. He anticipated the shot and dumped into the soft spot for a placement which Tommy could not reach.

He went back to receive, rotating the racket in his hands. He watched for a tip-off, saw Tommy's lips compress. He sloped to the right for a forehand, got it. He banked it down to the forehand corner, slicing off a high bound. When Tommy slammed it, he was in and tapping it cross-court.

Now Tommy fidgeted. Red had not tried the net before. He had stayed back, waiting. Tommy tried to soften his game.

Red did not seem to increase the pace. It was a subtle thing, born of years of play, of crossing rackets with the great of all time. If he only had the legs, the stamina, he thought, he could show them a thing or two.

He broke Tommy to square the match.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There was a moment's pause at the net while they wiped off with towels and rinsed their dry mouths. Tommy was eying him askance, but Red was looking into the stands. He could see Mary Palmer, perched on the top row away from her friends, her chin cupped. His eyes blurred a little then, and he thought he could see Susan, and he knew he could remember Susan very well, and that he would never be able to forget her.

He went to position. He served.

Tommy never saw the first ball. The linesman called, "Fault!"

Red smiled without rancor. It had been good, and he knew it, and Tommy sensed it. He played his second almost as hard. It was good, and Tommy flubbed it.

He served again. His first was a blazing ace. He moved back. He dropped a ball. He cut his racket across it underhand. It barely cleared the net, but dropped into play, and because of the soft spot it did not bounce. Tommy looked silly going for it. Then Red served another blasting ace.

Tommy was white with rage at the underhand service at being beaten a love game. He tried to smash his service in. He succeeded—but Red, walking in like a Colossus, met it on the rise and contemptuously topped it for a cross-court placement.

Tommy missed his next two tries at returns.

Red was laughing now. He served out, four straight brilliant strokes which left Tommy floundering.

The crowd was strangely silent. At four-love for Red they stirred, began looking at one another with raised eyebrows.

Tommy was slipping, sliding. His concentration had evaporated. His mouth was open; his breath came in uneven gasps. Red walked into him, took the net, slapped away Tommy's shots as though he were toying with a child.

It was five-love. Tommy tried to regain balance. Red, stalking like a jungle tiger, was everywhere seemingly without effort. Tommy drove one which seemed a sure point. Red made a leap, turned his back, struck out from that position. The ball skidded, tipped the net, dolphined over Tommy's desperate attempt at a save—and fell into the deep corner.

"Game, set and match to Mr. Norwalk," the umpire announced disapprovingly.

THEY had to give him the cup. They hated it, but they did it as gracefully as they could. They were stunned, as Tommy was stunned. Red put on his cocky grin, bowed deeply, and left the court. Before anyone knew it, he had also left the Hilldale

Club, and where he went no one knew.

No one except J. Perry Palmer, that is. Red was packing in his room at the hotel when J. Perry walked in.

Red put his hands on his hips. "On second thought, I'm glad you guessed it," he said. "I've got a few things to say to you. I want to tell you why I beat the kid."

J. Perry said; "Here, now, I'm not such a fool—"

"I found some guts," said Red harshly. "I found a game I never had before. I put it together not only to beat him but to humiliate him. To knock the idea of tennis out of his head. And I did it because he's a good kid and your daughter loves him. He'll run to her for comfort now. They'll be married."

Palmer said, "Just a moment, young man—"

"And you can go get yourself a new ape!" He picked up the contract he had forced Palmer to sign. "I was going to mail you the pieces because I'm sick of looking at you and listening to you, but this is better." He ripped the paper and threw it in Palmer's face. "That's for nothing. Now go on—get me good and mad and see what happens!"

PALMER did not react as Red expected. He just stood there, looking like Bushman. He said: "I expected it, you crazy young fool. I knew it. When I learned you did have the guts, I started thinking. I tell you I'm not such a fool, and I can prove it."

"I don't care what you prove," snapped Red. "I'm getting out. There's someone I've got to see."

"I know," nodded Palmer. He was actually beaming. "I know everything about you, don't I? I looked you up, didn't I?"

"You know nothing," cried Red. "Beat it. Scram! I hope your grandchildren look like Bushman!"

"Bushman?" Palmer was puzzled. He retreated before the waving arms of the excited Red. "Look. It's all right if they marry. I've changed my mind."

Red dropped his hands. "Okay. Then you've got some little grain of humanity in you."

Palmer reached for the door handle. "And I don't want you to run away. I'll make it up to you. When you showed me your real courage, showed fight; when you made me sign the contract and then fought back—" He opened the door. His voice dropped and for the first time seemed to have lost confidence. He said cajolingly: "Might have been wrong. But I took a chance. If you're angry, I apologize."

Someone was coming past him. Red felt the blood rush to his face. He was cold and hot at the same time, and the strain of the day and of the match just played seemed all at once to count against him.

*"I can play the ape," mocked Red. "Run and knock it back." Palmer grated: "Don't make fun of me, Norwalk—I'm warnin' you."*

"Sent for her," mumbled Palmer. He did not look like Bushman now. He looked like a pathetic old man. "Got straight with my own daughter. Last night. She hoped you'd win, too. Smart girl. So I sent for Miss Pauley. If I was wrong—"

Susan looked like heaven. She walked straight into his arms. She said in the throaty voice he remembered so well: "I saw it. You were wonderful, Red. You were magnificent. You could have quit, because you didn't want the job. He told me."

Red was reaching past her with his right hand. He was grabbing J. Perry Palmer's sleeve, pulling the old man back into the room. He was getting one arm around J. Perry and leaning his weight upon the two of them until he could get his breath.

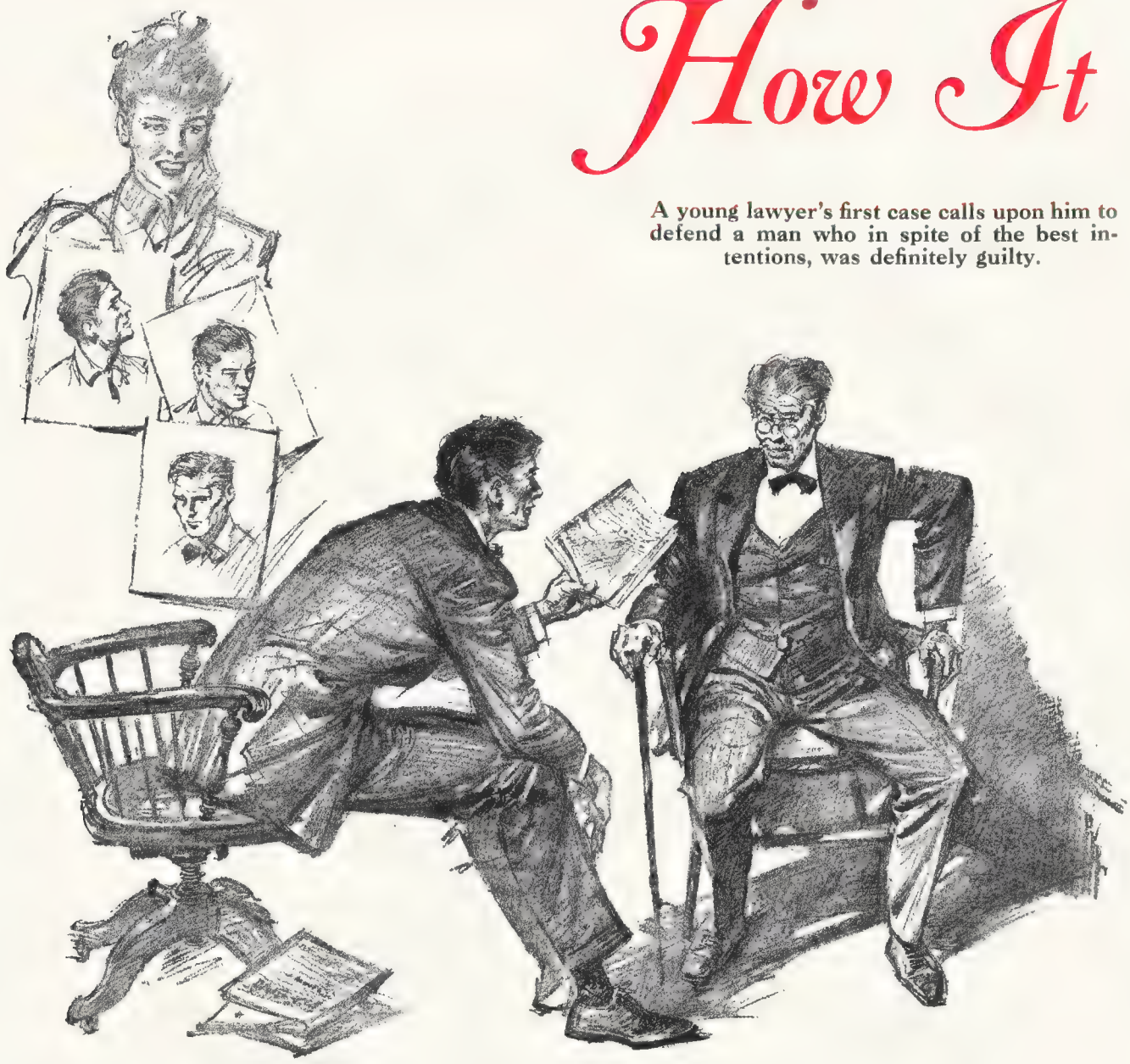
Finally he managed to say: "Honest, J. Perry, apes couldn't play tennis. Honestly."

"I admit it." J. Perry Palmer blew his nose. He said: "Planned a little party: Mary and Tommy and you two. At the club. Let everyone see us—maybe they won't hate us so much." He paused, then said, "Later. See you there. Later."

He slammed the door going out, but they did not hear him.

# How It

**A young lawyer's first case calls upon him to defend a man who in spite of the best intentions, was definitely guilty.**



YOUNG MR. ALAN LEWIS, attorney-at-law, looked up from the papers on his desk as he heard the outer office door open and close. He picked up the telephone, keeping his finger on the hook so that there would be no connection.

"Yes, Mr. Jones," he said in a loud voice, "I'd be glad to take your case. I don't know just where I can squeeze it in, but I'll manage somehow. Suppose you drop in to see me—say next Friday at four? Fine. Good-by, Mr. Jones."

Young Mr. Lewis made a loud clicking noise with the phone, got up from his desk, and walked over to the door leading to the bare waiting-room.

"I'm sorry, but my secretary has gone out on an errand," he said, "and I was busy on the—" The speech died as he saw the man standing in the middle of the waiting-room, looking around him. He was an old man with bushy white eyebrows that billowed down over the tops of his steel-rimmed spectacles. "Oh, sir! It's you, Judge Foster."

The old man chuckled. "That secretary will be back in about 1953—eh, son?"

"I guess that's about it, sir," Alan said.

"Maybe not then, from all I hear," Judge Foster said.

"Won't you come inside, sir? There's a pretty comfortable chair there."

"I had these same offices when I was starting out myself," Judge Foster said. "Forty years ago! Windows still stick at the top?"

"Yes sir." Alan pulled the armchair up beside his desk and waited for the Judge to sit down. Then he went around to his desk.

"I got out of these offices and finally to a judgeship by not being a damn fool," the Judge said mildly.

"Yes sir," Alan said. "But up to now I haven't even had a chance to be a damn fool."

"Things are slow?"

"Things are at a standstill, sir."

"And they're going to stay that way," the Judge said, "if what I hear is true."

"What's that, sir?"

"This Stack case," the Judge said. "You might as well commit suicide in the public square, son, as handle that case. I don't believe in putting my finger in other people's pies, but I was a friend of your father's, and at the

# Really Happened

by HUGH PENTECOST

risk of sounding like an old fogy, I came here to advise you to drop it."

"I see," Alan said unhappily. "It's the first case that's come my way, sir, since I set up my offices."

"And it'll be your last," the Judge said. "Let's face it, son. The town of Waldren is dominated by the Waldren Woolen Mills and the Waldren family. Mr. Stanley Waldren just about runs this town, controls its economics, its politics, its general doings. You take the Stack case and Mr. Waldren will have a black mark against you in his book and you might as well move to Timbuctoo."

"A man has his conscience, sir."

"Fine," Judge Foster said. "I approve. But let someone else handle the Stack case."

"No one else will, sir—for the very reasons you give. They won't buck the Waldren family."

"But you will, eh?"

"Well, sir, someone's got to help the boy."

"Why? He's guilty. Everyone knows he's guilty."

Alan looked down at the papers on his desk. "Oh, he did it, all right," he said. "But—well, there were extenuating circumstances. I—I don't like to ask a favor, sir, but since you're here. . . . Well, I've just made some notes for my opening address to the jury. Would you consider looking at them, sir?"

The Judge grunted. "I guess it's no worse wasting time that way than in gossiping on the post-office steps. Let's see 'em."

ALAN picked up the papers and arranged them. "There's something about the case, sir, that gets you. I think you'll see what I mean."

"I doubt it," said the Judge. "I got over being sentimental about clients years ago. But, let's see your fancy oratory."

Alan handed the Judge the papers and then sat watching him eagerly as he began to read the top sheet.

*Notes on the Stack Case*

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I suppose in every town and city in America today there are boys like Roy Stack. Waldren doesn't know too much about Roy. He's been living here only two years, and that makes him a "carpetbagger" in a small town like this. It makes him almost a suspicious character. Roy, in spite of the fact that he walks with a pronounced limp, is not anyone who stands out in a crowd. People have got used to seeing young men in their communities with one sort of physical disability or another. That comes of making the world safe for democracy to get ready to fight another war to make the world safe for democracy. Roy's game leg, acquired in Army service, has made it impossible for him to do any kind of heavy manual labor.

It should be made clear that I am not playing for sympathy on the grounds that Roy is a wounded war veteran, crippled in the defense of his country. Roy's injury is pathetically unheroic. He fell off the back end of a truck in training-camp in Georgia, and before he could scramble out of the way the truck behind ran over his leg and crushed it badly. Roy is shy about it, because people see him limping along the street and imagine he was wounded in action, and when they ask him about it he has to tell the rather absurd story of having fallen off the back end of a truck.

When Roy was finally released from the Army hospital after several operations on his leg and a long period of recuperation, he had to find work he was capable of doing. He had no special educational training. He hadn't been in the Army long enough to learn any new mechanical trade. That's how he happened to get into the business he's in—managing a small-town movie theater. He tied up with a company that owns a chain of small theaters and eventually was sent here to Waldren to manage the Bijou.

It has no particular bearing on this case, but most citizens of this town know that Roy has done a good job here. The theater is immaculately clean, and Roy has made a study of the kind of pictures the people in Waldren like, and by and large he gets them. The theater runs so smoothly that nobody thinks about it, or stops to consider that some real effort goes into the job.

There is another thing people don't stop to realize. Sooner or later the entire town passes through the doors of the Bijou, and a large portion of the people attend regularly every week. Since the bill changes three times a week, many of them are repeaters. I don't think many people have thought of the fact that the manager of a small-town theater, or even a neighborhood theater in a big city, gets to know things about the lives of people without ever talking to them or even hearing gossip. The same faces pass by him week after week. He becomes aware of periods of depression, and periods of prosperity. He notices old clothes growing older and more frayed; he notices new suits and dresses. When the traveling man's wife comes alone, he knows that the man is on the road. When the doctor misses his regular Thursday night, he knows there is a birth or a death in the air, or perhaps an emergency operation at the hospital. He sees the adolescent love affairs bloom and fade, just by noticing who comes with whom. And he sees other things—the people who do not come together but somehow manage to sit together in the darkened theater: the romances that are supposed to be secret, but which, just in the course of doing his job, the theater manager gets to recognize.

Roy Stack is an observant young man, and I dare say he knows more about the people in this town than the local doctors or lawyers. (Note: *Underscore this point. It might hit someone on the jury!*) Roy, shy and withdrawn, has no very rich life of his own, and it isn't surprising that he did and does a lot of daydreaming. During the last few months those dreams have centered around one person—Miss Janet Cain. And those dreams have brought him here, to this courtroom, charged with a crime. That Roy actually, physically committed the crime we do not deny. But we do deny that he is morally guilty. We claim that he was driven to his action by others who are really to blame—who are really guilty.

I imagine that Roy Stack is not the only young man in Waldren who has indulged in daydreams about Janet.

*"What a wonderful wife she'll make for some guy!" That's what everyone says about Janet.*

Janet is a very special girl; most of you know that. She is here in the courtroom so that I don't need to describe her particular kind of beauty to you. Most of you have seen her grow up, and have admired her, not only for her looks, but for the quality of her character. There isn't a nicer, friendlier, warmer, less self-conscious girl in town. She's no Hollywood glamour girl, with artificial this and artificial that. I've heard one remark made about Janet over and over again, which just about sums her up as a person. "What a wonderful wife she'll make for some guy!" That's what everyone says about Janet.

She's never seemed, until recently, to get seriously interested in any one boy. But if she was seen dating someone regularly for a while, you could see people shaking their heads and you knew they were thinking: "He's not half good enough for her."

Now Janet is a regular movie-goer. There isn't much else to do in a small town like Waldren. Half a dozen times a year one of the organizations like the Legion or the Lions or the Fire Company gives a dance; but outside that and the movies, there isn't much else except a few roadside bars-and-grills, with their juke boxes and pinball games. You can get your fill of those pretty quickly. So Janet, like most of the young people in town, took in the movies once or twice a week.

It's a funny thing, but until the events took place which are the cause of our being here today, Janet didn't even know Roy Stack's name. She knew who he was, of course. Each night when she went to the movies she saw him standing quietly in a corner of the lobby watching the crowd come in. She thought of him simply as "the manager," and if she had any other thoughts about him they were probably summed up in the conclusion that he was a very shy, not particularly outgoing person. Perhaps she became aware that each night when she came in his eyes seemed to fix on her for an instant or two, and one night she spoke to him.

"Hello," she said. He was standing by the ticket-taker.

"Good evening," Roy said.

That was all, but somehow, after that, he was always by the ticket-taker when she came in. The words of greeting varied only slightly. Sometimes she would comment on the weather, and he would agree. Sometimes she would ask: "Good show?" and he would always reply, "I hope so." That was all that ever passed between them until Janet visited Roy Stack in the town jail the day after his arrest.

Janet was just being friendly when she talked to Roy in the theater, but to Roy it was the beginning of an elaborate daydream fantasy. Roy knew, after the first time he heard her pleasant husky voice, that here was the one girl in the whole world he had ever really wanted for himself —the one girl who might overlook his awkwardness, his shyness, his internal tensions. And also, even as he thought this, he knew that Janet was not for him. He wasn't good enough for her. He probably thought about it in some sort of cliché like "—not good enough to touch her shoelace." Roy had disciplined his emotions for so long that he never even thought of making an aggressive step on his own behalf. To stay in the cliché vein, he worshiped her from afar. It was just a pleasant, warm, self-indulgent kind of dream that Roy had until a few months ago when he noticed that Janet was now appearing regularly at the theater with the same young man. The young man was Ed Davis, the chief mechanic at Marshall's garage. Everybody in town knows Ed. He is a hardworking, self-respecting young fellow who is definitely "going places." Sooner or later Ed will own his own garage, get one of the good automobile agencies, and be one of the solid business men of the town. Roy knew this—because Roy did some quiet checking on Ed. As soon as he suspected that Ed and Janet were

something more than casual about each other, Roy made it his business. He couldn't have her himself; but she mustn't be hurt.

Roy found out. Ed was solid. Ed was dependable. There'd be no world travel to mysterious and romantic places—the kind of places Roy had taken Janet in his dreams. There'd be nothing dramatic or exciting about her life with Ed, but Janet would be secure, well taken care of, and loved within the capacities of Ed to love. I suspect there was a faintly bitter taste of jealousy in Roy's mouth. Ed wasn't so much more than Roy himself—except that he was all in one piece, and he had the liking and respect of the whole community. Roy watched and he could tell, from nothing more than the expression on Janet's face, that she was coming to a point of decision. It wouldn't be long, Roy thought, until one night when she came to the theater with Ed he'd see a good but conservative diamond on her finger. Then the dreams would have to be rigorously blacked out.

But things happened before that moment came. One night Janet arrived at the theater alone. It was the first time in a good many weeks that she had been there without Ed. Roy felt a small alarm for a moment, but one look at her face and the sound of her cheery hello reassured him. There was nothing wrong. Ed had probably had to work late at the garage.

Roy made no connection between this fact and the arrival a few moments later in front of the theater of a bright yellow Cadillac convertible, glittering with chrome. Roy felt his muscles tense, though. The car belonged to Bob Waldren, son of Mr. Stanley Waldren of the Waldren Mills. Bob was everything that Roy at once disliked and envied. Bob was tall, with curly blond hair, blue eyes, and an arrogant smile. He had been a star athlete at a fancy prep school and an All-American halfback at his college. There was nothing Bob Waldren had ever wanted in his life—from a Shetland pony when he was four, down to the gaudy car now parked in front of the theater—which Bob's father had not given him.

As Bob vaulted over the door of his car—it was typical that he didn't open the door—Roy drew a deep breath and limped out to meet him.

"I'm sorry, Waldren, but you can't park your car there in front of the theater," Roy said.

Bob looked down at him with an indulgent smile. "Oh, it's you again," he said. "Don't tell me we're going through this again. It'll turn into a vaudeville act."

"It's clearly marked," Roy insisted. "You can't park there."

"So I'll get a parking ticket," Bob said, the implication being that a parking ticket was easily handled by his father.

"It blocks the way for other people who want to get out at the door," Roy said.

"So let 'em eat cake," Bob said, grinning. "I'll do the worrying, buster."

Roy felt a little knot of muscle rippling along his jaw. "I'm sorry, but as long as your car is parked there I cannot sell you an admission ticket to the theater."

Bob gave him a lazy look, as if he were deciding whether or not to pick him up and heave him over the nearest fence. "I don't like being pushed around, buster," he said.

"It's a simple rule that everyone has to obey," Roy said.

Bob shrugged. "Okay, you win this time. If this wasn't a picture I particularly wanted to see I wouldn't let you get away with it. Some other time we'll have it out."

So Bob vaulted back into his car, drove it to an accepted parking place, and came back to the ticket window.

Roy hadn't seen the picture he was showing that night. He wondered about it, because he knew Bob Waldren wouldn't ordinarily have given in so easily. Roy moved in from the lobby when he heard the last of the shorts going off. The crowd for the first show had just about all arrived and he wasn't needed outside. He stood in the back of the theater watching the picture unfold. It was a little thing about a young doctor and his wife, and how the wife wanted to have a good time, but always, when she planned something, the young doctor was called out to deliver a baby, or for an accident or something. Roy found his attention wandering. He knew the formula well. The young wife would find herself going out with some other young man. The young man would get drunk. There would be an accident and the wife's boy friend would be seriously injured. Then the young wife would be forced to assist her husband in an emergency operation, probably holding a flashlight or an old kerosene lamp. And she would come to realize—a standard piece of corn—how fine he was, how solid, how dependable. Roy was puzzled. Why should Bob Waldren particularly want to see such a picture?

Then Roy's attention was attracted by a slight disturbance a couple of rows in front of him in the theater.

Roy moved noiselessly down the aisle. He is used to the dark theater and his eyes adjust quickly. He stood still trying to place the trouble. Then he heard Bob Waldren's voice, low, amused.

"Sure I fixed it," Bob said. "I sent one of the family cars down to the garage so Ed would have to work. You wouldn't have a date with me because you had a previous engagement—so I fixed it."

"I'm sorry," Janet said, "but either you'll have to move or I will."

"Don't be a sourpuss," Bob said. "What's wrong with me? I haven't got two heads."

Roy's mouth went cottony dry. Bob had found his way to a seat next to Janet. He was annoying her. How could he be got out of there without creating a disturbance that would draw everyone's attention to Janet? While Roy stood there, wondering just what to do, the disturbance took place. There was a resounding smack as Janet slapped Bob Waldren's face. Several people stood up around them, protesting angrily. Above the noise rose Bob's laughter.

"Okay, baby, you win this round," he said. He edged his way out into the aisle. He didn't see Roy, but he actually brushed him aside as he started out. Roy, shaking from head to foot with a violent rage, seemed rooted to the spot, unable to move. It was not fear of Bob Waldren that kept him from moving. Bob Waldren could have handled him easily, but Roy wasn't afraid of that. It was the impulse to commit a murder that left Roy unable to move hand or foot. . . .

*(Note: Pause here for drink of water. Let this part of the story sink in as we will now change tone and point of view.)*

And now, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I want to take you away from Roy Stack for a moment—Roy, torn by an emotion he had never felt in his life—to Janet Cain.

Most of you know Janet's background. Her mother died when she was small and she has grown up with her father as all the family she had. There are a lot of people who think Bill Cain is a no-good guy. He drinks too much. He has never held any steady employment. If you want to know anything about hunting, or fishing, or the nearest convivial bar Bill Cain is an authority. But hard, steady work has never been his dish. "Just a good-natured bum" is what most people call Bill Cain. But I suggest there must be a little more to Bill than that. You don't raise a child who comes out so solid, level headed, and well adjusted unless you have some good qualities.

Janet went to work early. She graduated from high school at sixteen and went to work as a typist in the Waldren mill. Everybody in Waldren works at the mill at some time or another, it seems. Janet wasn't just an ordinary typist, and she began a steady climb of the ladder until she is now head of office personnel at the mill.

Janet says she never met Bob Waldren until a few months ago, though of course she had seen him around town all her life, from his Shetland-pony days, down through the jalopy with the wisecracks painted on it, to the shiny yellow Cadillac. When he graduated from college, after headlining the sports pages for three years, Bob, technically, went to work at the mill.

"Learn the business from the ground up," Mr. Stanley Waldren said the theory was.

Bob started to learn the business, sometimes giving as much as a whole hour a day to it. He hadn't been there a week before he spotted Janet. He sauntered up to her desk.

"Hi, pigeon," he said. "I'm the boss' son."

"Good morning, Mr. Waldren," Janet said.

"We'll have to do something about that 'Mr. Waldren'!" Bob said.

"I am sitting up with a sick friend," Janet said, dryly. "And now if you'll excuse me. . . ."

Bob wasn't put off. Every day he stopped by Janet's desk and every day he asked her for a date and was refused. Now here was a young man who wasn't accustomed to being denied anything he wanted. I don't think there was anything in his mind except the desire to overcome a challenging situation. Girls never turned down Bob Waldren; he was gay, handsome, would be fabulously wealthy some day and had all the money right now he needed to spend any way he chose. It was exasperating to find a girl who found nothing desirable in all these assets.

I imagine it became something of an obsession with Bob. He made inquiries around town and learned that Janet was going steady with Ed Davis. He actually spied on them, although he wouldn't have like the term if anyone had described his behavior to him that way. He found out about their regular excursions to the movies and he did take a car to Marshall's Garage at the last minute one evening so that Ed had to work overtime. That was the night of the disturbance in the Bijou—the night Janet slapped his face.

*Illustrated by Orison MacPherson*

***"I was a heel," Bob said. "I'd like to make it up to you somehow."***

Janet says that the very next morning Bob was waiting in her office for her when she arrived. She says there was something different about him, although she couldn't say exactly what it was.

"I'm sorry about last night," he told her.

"Let's forget it," she answered.

"I can't forget it," he said. "I—I didn't want things to turn out that way."

"It doesn't matter very much, does it?" Janet said.

"It matters quite a lot," Bob said. "I was a heel. I'd like to make it up to you somehow."

"Well, it was nice of you to come and apologize," Janet said. "Shall we let it drop there?"

"No," Bob said.

"Look, Mr. Waldren—"

"Do me a favor," Bob said. "You don't like me. You're the kind of person who doesn't like or dislike people on the basis of whims. You have reasons for feeling the way you do. Will you tell me what they are?"

"Really, Mr. Waldren, I—"

"Not now. Not here," Bob said. "I happen to know Ed Davis goes into Poughkeepsie tonight where he's taking a special course in mechanics. Will you have dinner with me and tell me then what it is about me that you don't like?"

"I'm sorry, Mr. Waldren, but I really couldn't. I—"

"I'm asking very humbly," he said.

Janet says he *was* humble. She says that somehow she didn't think it was an act. It surprised her, and she thought to herself that it might really be doing him a favor if she pointed out a few things to him that made him so universally disliked in town. So she said she'd have dinner with him.

THEY went to the Silver Crown, which is a high-class and expensive place, as you know. Janet says the evening began with her telling Bob what a spoiled brat he was, and ended by their both telling each other their life histories, their hopes and dreams. She says he was extremely polite, made no passes at her, and that she really thought he was rather nice. She says she felt some real sympathy for his story of what it was like to be the son of a man who was actually the dictator in a small community. People pretended to like him for reasons of policy. He never got a chance to operate on his own. He couldn't escape being Stanley Waldren's son. People felt they had to be nice to him and pretend to like him, and because it was forced on them, they really hated him for it.

"I guess I act kind of loud and boisterous as a sort of defense against what I know they really feel," he said.

Janet told Ed Davis all about the evening, including the fact that Bob had asked her to go out with him again.

"It wouldn't hurt to be nice to him," Ed said, "as long as he doesn't get fresh. They're building their own garage up at the mill, to take care of all the trucks and cars. They're going to need someone to run it. It's not impossible I might get the job."

Because Ed felt that way, Janet says, she accepted a second invitation from Bob. She says he still behaved himself and they spent most of the time just talking. On the way home from dinner they stopped at a roadside place and danced together a couple of times. He was a very good dancer, Janet said. He finally drove her home. Just as she was getting out of the car he reached out and closed his fingers on her arm.

"Janet," he said, in a husky voice. "Will you marry me?"

She was so astonished that she broke out laughing, she says. She saw a flash of hurt in his eyes, and then the old arrogance took its place.

"I always get what I want, baby," he said. "Right now I want you."

*"All you have to do, Janet darlin', is be a sensible girl."*

She knew just enough about him to recognize that her thoughts had brought on this attitude of his and she was sorry. But she also realized that basically that was his character and quite unchangeable.

"I think we'd better get one thing straight," she told him. "I don't deny that I've had fun going out with you, Bob. But we live in entirely different worlds. You could never adjust yourself to mine, or get any pleasure from it, and I could never adjust myself to yours. Our values are different. Thanks for two pleasant evenings—and good-night."

She realized that he stood there watching her until she was in the house and had closed the door behind her. . . .

*(Note: Another pause here. Drink water—or shuffle papers. Give them time for things to sink in.)*

Janet was upset by Ed Davis' reaction when she told him what had happened.

"As long as he didn't get fresh with you," Ed said, "did you have to break things off that way? That just about blows my chances for the garage at the mill. Everybody knows how you and I are. Young Waldren will take it out on me."

It was a tactless way to put it, but Janet knew that really Ed was upset because if he *had* got the job at the mill they could have been married at once. But she forgot all about Ed's reaction a few days later when something happened that really burned her up. When she got home from work her father was there, and he was tight as a coot.

I should explain that when Bill Cain got drunk he was usually very morose and moody. I think the truth is that Bill had been very much in love with Janet's mother and that he'd never recovered from the loss of her. When he drank all the loneliness and aching sense of loss backed up on him.

But on this night Bill Cain was unbelievably gay. He grabbed Janet's hands and waltzed her around the room.

"You won't believe it!" he said. "You just won't believe it, Janet me darlin'."

Janet was upset by his drinking but his high spirits were so unusual that she found herself caught up in them.

"What is it, Dad? What's made you so happy?"

"A job!" Bill Cain cried. "The kind of job a man dreams of. The only job in the world I'm fitted for, darlin' . . . and it's mine!"

"But what is it, Dad?"

"You know Stanley Waldren's estate?" Bill said. "There's a thousand acres of woodland—stocked with game and fish. I'm to be the caretaker. I'm to be there—out there in the woods—with nothing to do but watch over it. The one thing in the world I'm fitted to do." He paused, breathless, and gave her a kind of silly smile. "I—I guess I'm a little dizzy. The whole thing's too good to believe." He sank down into a chair. Then he looked up at her, still smiling that silly smile, and waggled a finger at her. "All you have to do, Janet me darlin', is be a sensible girl and I've got the job for life!"

The full meaning of it came over Janet very slowly and she found herself suddenly shaking with fury. She started to protest to Bill but his head had dropped forward and he'd passed out. It was clear enough what it meant. Bob had gone to his father and got the job for Bill—conditionally! Poor Bill could have the kind of work he'd dreamed of all his life, provided Janet was nice to Bob. Maybe Bob was even serious about the marriage thing; he couldn't stand defeat and when she'd laughed at him all the old need to win any kind of contest had taken hold of him. His first maneuver was to try to buy her—through Bill.

She couldn't sleep that night because of her anger. She tossed on her pillow, rehearsing what she would say to Bob when she saw him at the office the next morning. It wasn't until she got there and was sitting rigidly at her desk waiting for Bob to show, that she realized she hadn't seen him since their last date—that he hadn't been in the office since then.

I think it will not be news to most of you that the whole town got to know about Bill Cain's job on the Waldren estate. And it wasn't long before a few of the local snoopers tied up the job with the fact that Janet had had a couple of dates with Bob Waldren. Those things get known in a small town, no matter how quiet and unflamboyant the occasions. Some people thought it was a good thing. Some people were disappointed in Janet.

"Never thought she'd fall for money," they said.

And since it was so generally known it will not come as a surprise to you that Roy Stack knew, too. He had heard the gossip around the drugstore and in the theater lobby. He was sick about it. He knew Janet hadn't fallen for the lure of money. He recognized it for what it must be—a particularly vicious kind of blackmail. He wondered what Ed Davis would do about it. He wondered what he would do about it if he were in Ed's shoes. This was the time when you fought for the person you loved. But how? How would he go about it? Because this *was* the person Roy loved, even though she hardly knew he was alive. He had nothing to lose, he told himself. No matter what happened to him, if he could get Janet out of the predicament she was in it would be worth any price he would have to pay.

You may say that this was premeditation. I suppose in a way it was, although Roy Stack had no plan, no notion of what he could do. He thought about it, day and night, without arriving at any kind of plan that made sense. And then came the night when the whole thing happened without any thought or planning at all. . . .

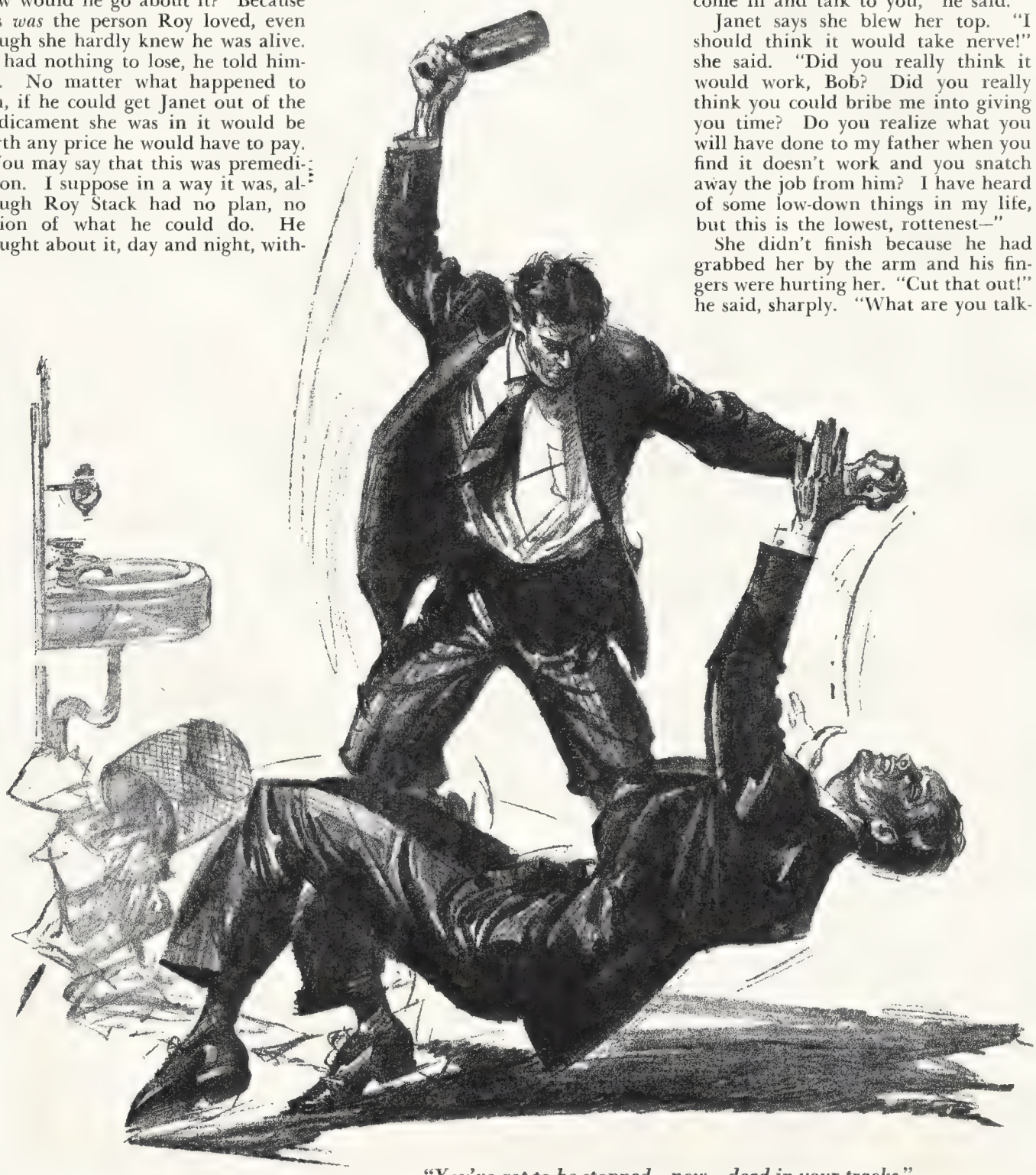
*(Note: Pause again to let this take effect.)*

I take you now, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, to that night. Bill Cain had already begun gathering equipment for his new job and he wasn't home for supper. Ed Davis was working at the garage. Janet, having eaten her own supper, had decided to go to the movies. As she came out of her house and started down the path she saw Bob Waldren sitting on the little bench at the foot of the garden. It was the first time she had seen him for ten days, and all her pent-up indignation rose to the surface. She says she didn't notice then that he looked tired, that he was wearing an old suit and a gray flannel shirt, and that the flashy Cadillac was nowhere to be seen. She says he looked up at her with a twisted little smile.

"I was trying to get up my nerve to come in and talk to you," he said.

Janet says she blew her top. "I should think it would take nerve!" she said. "Did you really think it would work, Bob? Did you really think you could bribe me into giving you time? Do you realize what you will have done to my father when you find it doesn't work and you snatch away the job from him? I have heard of some low-down things in my life, but this is the lowest, rottenest—"

She didn't finish because he had grabbed her by the arm and his fingers were hurting her. "Cut that out!" he said, sharply. "What are you talk-



*"You've got to be stopped—now—dead in your tracks."*

ing about? Bribes—and your father—*What are you saying?"*

Janet says she was puzzled, because he didn't seem to be putting on an act.

"Did you really think you could get somewhere with me by giving my father something he wanted?"

"What do you mean—something he wanted?"

"The job! The job as caretaker on your father's estate."

Janet says she saw the color drain out of Bob's face. "Somebody gave your father a job on Dad's estate?"

"Yes. You know it very well. Gave him the job—provided I would be a sensible girl! Well, if you think—"

"Shut up!" Bob said. "Now listen to me. I don't know what you're talking about—but I'll find out. You've said I was arrogant. Perhaps I am, because the night you laughed at me when I asked you to marry me I went home and told my father that I was in love with you and that I was going to marry you if you'd have me. My father flew into a rage and said you weren't good enough for me, and that if I persisted in that idea he'd disown me. I told him that would be doing me a favor, because you didn't think much of the Waldrens." He paused for breath. "I haven't been to see you because I was trying to work things out your way. I left home ten days ago. I've got myself a job, Janet. It isn't much . . . but at least I'm standing on my own feet, I'm trying to operate by your values. You said we lived in different worlds. Well, I'm moving over into yours . . . because I love you and because there's no world at all without you in it."

Janet said everything felt sort of upside down. She says she felt mixed up. She says her heart was pounding against her ribs. But before she could say anything he went on.

"You go on to the movies," he said. "I'll get the straight of this about your old man, and I'll meet you there. Will you do that?"

Janet says she meant to say no, but she heard herself saying, "Yes, Bob."

So that's how it was. She went to the Bijou. Roy Stack was standing by the ticket-taker and he said "Good evening" as usual. Janet didn't speak. She just nodded, and Roy thought she looked dazed and hurt. He must think of something, he told himself, some way to help. The picture had been on about half an hour and Roy was still wrestling with his problem when Bob Waldren, the cause of all the trouble, walked up to the ticket window.

Roy slipped inside the theater—retreating to a dark corner. He was going to watch Bob, make absolutely sure there was no connection between Bob's arrival and Janet. Unfortunately Bob went directly to where Janet was sitting and took the seat she'd managed to save beside her.

"Listen," Bob whispered to Janet. "I've seen my father. He offered your old man the job, all right, provided you'd be a sensible girl. You were right about that, too. But being sensible meant that you were to stay strictly away from me. Do you understand that, darling? You were being bribed—but to stay away from me. So now, Janet—darling Janet—will you marry me?"

Janet says she can't explain it, but she knew then and there that she was in love. That a man who could grow up so quickly, could recognize the real values of living when the chips were down, was her kind of man. But she didn't get a chance to answer because someone tapped Bob on the shoulder.

It was Roy Stack.

"You're wanted on the telephone, Mr. Waldren," Roy said. "It's an emergency."

"Meet me in the lobby," Bob said to Janet. "We've got to go somewhere we can talk." Then he got up and followed Roy to the back of the theater. "Where is the phone?" he asked.

"In the men's washroom," Roy said.

Bob, I guess, didn't stop to think that was rather odd. He opened the door to the washroom and went in. He looked around for the phone and didn't see it. Then he saw that Roy had followed him in. He saw that Roy had a soft-drink bottle in his hand, but he didn't think anything of it, I imagine.

"Where's the phone?" he asked.

"There isn't any phone call," Roy said, his voice trembling.

"No call? Then why—"

"You should have left her alone," Roy said. "Somebody has got to teach you that she *must not be molested!* Somebody has got to teach you she can't be bought! That she can't be pushed around."

"Now wait just a minute," Bob said.

"There's no time left, Mr. Waldren. You've had all your life to learn to be a decent guy, but you haven't learned. You've got to be stopped—now—dead in your tracks."

Roy didn't give Bob a chance. He sprang at him and brought the bottle down on the side of his head. Bob staggered back and Roy hit him again and again.

Five minutes later Roy walked up to Janet in the back of the theater. "Mr. Waldren has had an accident," he said, in a small, tight voice. "I've phoned Ed Davis. He'll be here in a moment to take you home."

*(Note: Give them a moment to get it and then finish, simply and without flourishes.)*

So you see, ladies and gentlemen, it was kind of mixed up. The Waldrens have always been the Waldrens, getting what they wanted one way or another. There was no reason for anyone to believe they had changed. The evidence, as it related to Bill Cain's job, seemed to indicate they hadn't. Roy Stack is guilty of assault on Robert Waldren—who fortunately suffered no more serious injury than a deep cut and a slight concussion. Bob Waldren did not swear out the warrant against Roy. It was his father, Stanley Waldren. Bob and Janet understand why Roy did what he did, and Janet says she is deeply touched. She says Bob has told her he always had it coming to him, and that the fact it happened after he'd got wise to himself is unimportant. He says Roy gave him something to remember his old self by. But Mr. Stanley Waldren must have his pound of flesh. Thou shalt not cross a Waldren! But it was Mr. Waldren's meddling that put his son on the spot. Mr. Waldren believes in the power of his money and the right to have his way, at all costs. What will happen if people go around attacking Waldrens? Well, I might be considered inciting to riot if I said what I think. But I do say this: Roy Stack's motives were of the best. He had every reason to believe he was protecting someone he loved from a real danger.

That is the story, ladies and gentlemen of the jury. What is to become of Roy is up to you.

Judge Foster put the papers down on the desk and cleared his throat loudly. "Must be getting mighty humid outside," he said. "Glasses all fogged up." He took a large handkerchief out of his hip pocket and began to rub his glasses vigorously. "That is really how it happened?"

"Yes, sir," Alan Lewis said. Then after a pause: "What do you think, sir?"

The Judge heaved himself up out of his chair. "I want to thank you, son," he said.

"Thank me for what, sir?"

"For reminding me that there are human elements that are sometimes more important than straight legality. I think,"—and the corners of his mouth went down in a wry smile—"I think there's hardly a person in town who won't be tickled pink to have Stanley Waldren's infernal meddling exposed for once. I think it might turn out you'll get some law business, son. And I owe you an apology."

"An apology, sir?"

"For trying to put *my* finger in *your* pie," the Judge said. "Forget I said anything about the Stack case, son. I like your chances." He started for the door. "Maybe that secretary will show up before 1953 at that!"

*. . . "MacArthur took the Côte-de-Chatillon, our whole line advanced and the Germans fell*

# Why MacArthur Is a

THE relief of General MacArthur after over fifty years of brilliant service, and the attempts to disparage him in this country and Britain, naturally pose the question: "How good a general is he?"

Every military man knows that there are many kinds of generals, good, bad and indifferent. Every student of military history knows there are very few great generals.

Even some of the successful generals in history gained their reputation by fighting a far inferior enemy, or owe it to political backing.

Today with the possibility of another world-wide war, this time with a powerful Russia, with weak allies depending upon our financial and military help, countries where a large section of the population lack the will to fight, it is of the greatest importance that we know our commanders; just how capable they are, and which one's advice we should take in determining what strategy we should prepare for today and use in the future.

In examining MacArthur's record, what are the characteristics which show him to be a great general?

### MacArthur Unworried by Setbacks

ONE of the characteristics of great generals is that when things go wrong, they are not upset, never become panicky and rapidly issue confused orders, to the dismay of their subordinates, and the loss of morale in the mass of their command. Second-rate generals, on the other hand, frequently get badly beaten as a consequence of their inability calmly to face a difficult situation and solve it.

In 1918, after the first American advance in the Argonne had captured all the German trenches and driven through into the difficult country of many irregular hills and forests, the American line was brought to a halt after bloody losses. It was in this phase that the Rainbow Division, which had been held in reserve, was brought in to relieve the First Division, which had driven a deep salient into the German lines before it was stopped. On the left flank the Germans for some distance held some low hills which enabled them to fire into the leading First Division battalion flank. In front there were several lines of hastily dug trenches and foxholes with a great deal of barbed wire. On the right flank the Germans held a long hill called the Côte-de-Chatillon. From this they fired not only into the right flank of the First Division, but the right rear. Across a small valley from the southern end of this hill there was another long ridge running in general to the east, called the Côte-de-St. Marie. From its top the Germans had successfully resisted and bloodily stopped every American attempt to capture it.

The first attacks of the Rainbow Division were failures.

Several colonels were relieved. The commanding general of the 83rd Infantry Brigade on the left was relieved. The commander of the Division was threatened with relief. MacArthur, commanding the right or 84th Infantry Brigade, remained unworried. He pointed out that the previous advances had been improperly planned—that they had not recognized that the Côte-de-Chatillon was the keystone of the whole German position; that until it was captured, we would be unable to advance; that once it was captured, the German position would crumble like an arch when its keystone is shoved out. He proposed to capture the Côte-de-Chatillon by concentrating on it, instead of having his troops spread along a line of attack, as had been true in a previous advance under orders from higher up.

At this time, this writer was preparing a map showing how the artillery fire of the division, instead of being scattered over the whole front, should be concentrated on the Côte-de-Chatillon. The Army Corps Commander, General P. Summerall—who had just been promoted to that post because of the determined way in which he had advanced the First Di-

*back some distance to the north to a new line."*

*Illustrated by John McDermott*

# Great General

*by* BRIG.-GEN. HENRY REILLY, A. U. S., RET.

vision against all opposition—visiting the front, saw this map and took it. As a consequence, this writer was put in command of the 83rd Infantry Brigade, and his plan adopted for the artillery support in the capture of the Côte-de-Chatillon.

MacArthur's men took the Côte-de-Chatillon; our whole line advanced, and the Germans fell back some distance to the north to a new line.

From then on, MacArthur was listed to be promoted to the command of a division.

During the following two weeks, when we merely held the line in front of the Germans' new position while preparations were being made to break through, MacArthur, who was always roaming around the front lines, came to my post of command on the side of a hill and made me an offer which I have always considered the greatest compliment I ever received.

He said: "Harry, as you probably know, I will soon have a division. I want you to come with me and command the artillery."

During the period while preparation was going on, the division commander occasionally ordered MacArthur and me to talk over with him the plans for the coming attack. Instead of having us come to his post of command, he always went to MacArthur's P.C., where I reported to him. There never was any doubt that MacArthur really commanded, because the division commander, after briefly stating the situation, would listen attentively, while MacArthur, walking around, would analyze it and deduce what should be done, in his typical, lucid, vivid and forceful way. While I always agreed with what he said, it wouldn't have made any difference if I hadn't, because all I was asked by the division commander would be—have you any objections to this plan? Of course, I didn't. . . .

At Bataan and Corregidor, during the trying period in Australia and New Guinea, and finally in the unsuccessful attempted advance to the Yalu, when a new and overwhelming force attacked, MacArthur's calmness and ability to make correct decisions have never deserted him.

### Adopts New Strategy First Used in World War I

MacArthur will go down in military history as the general who used tactical by-passing, first employed in 1918 during World War I, and made of it a basis for the new strategy which largely was responsible for beating the Japanese in World War II—a technique which not only brought victory, but materially reduced the number of killed and wounded.

Previous to the development of by-passing tactics in 1918, armies had always attacked head-on, capturing or trying to capture all strong points set up by the enemy to delay their advance. While maneuvering to outflank an enemy or get in his rear across his line of communications was frequently practiced or attempted, once two armies were engaged, there was no such thing as going ahead on a battlefield leaving behind you strong points successfully defended by the enemy.

The rule was not to go ahead at any part of the line until the strong point occupied by the enemy was captured. The Battle of Waterloo furnishes one of the best-known examples where two famous villages gallantly held by the British in front of their line put up such an obstinate defense that Napoleon's general attack upon Wellington was delayed.

This writer, when on the British front in 1914 and early in 1915, and on the French front in 1916 and 1917, saw frequent examples of this. Our attack on Belleau Woods in which the Marines, as always, distinguished themselves, is another example of a long-continued, determined frontal assault against a German strong point consisting of a forest, savagely defended.

*"Harry, as you probably know, I will soon have a division. I want you to come with me and command the artillery."*

However, late in 1917 and early in 1918, the French High Command commenced to realize why the German assault of 1917 against the British was so successful that a very large proportion of the French artillery and infantry had to be sent to their help, thus dangerously weakening the French front. It was only stopped after weeks of hard fighting, tremendous losses, and a German success which just missed breaking the line between Paris and the British-held Channel ports. The main reason was that the Germans had continued their advance despite obstinately defended strong points by pushing ahead in the intervals between, where they could continue to advance. Thus these points were isolated.

As a consequence, orders were issued that the French in all attacks would follow a similar tactical method. After all, with modern firearms and aviation, it was safe to isolate such strong points and leave them behind with sufficient infantry attacks to keep their garrison from breaking out while pounding them with artillery and aviation bombing.

At the same time orders were sent to the French corps commanders to assemble their generals and colonels, and with the aid of maps of some of the past attacks in which heavy losses had been incurred by head-on attacks on strong points, instruct them in the new tactics.

At that time the 42nd (Rainbow) Infantry Division was serving in a French Army Corps, split up among the four divisions of that corps. This for their first month's experience at the front.

MacArthur was Colonel and Chief of Staff of the Division, and this writer was Colonel of the 149th (Illinois) Field Artillery, a .75-mm. regiment.

After the French corps commander had finished his lecture on the new tactics, he turned to MacArthur and gave him a problem on the map. With MacArthur's habitual brilliance, he had fully grasped the new method and promptly and correctly solved his problem in a way which impressed everyone. Some of the others, including one brigadier general, stumbled around when given problems, and showed they had not grasped the principle of the new tactics.

Nearly a quarter of a century later, MacArthur, starting from New Guinea with insufficient forces, none too well trained, faced the task of advancing to the Philippines with Japanese-held islands and bases on New Guinea as well as in the Philippines, all heavily garrisoned. There is no doubt that the total number of Japanese troops was several times as great as those he had under his command.

If he followed the old strategy which the Japanese had counted upon, of capturing every one of these positions as he went along, he would probably have used up the troops available to him before he reached the Philippines — or would have reached the Philippines, if at all, with such a small number he could not have attacked and taken back those Islands.

However, he picked out the Japanese positions he considered essential to his advance, mostly based on attaining the airfields necessary if he was always to have land-based air support. The other garrisons he bypassed.

Had MacArthur accepted the strategical idea then prevalent in the Army Air Force, that bombing could produce decisive results, and that the ground and sea forces were auxiliary to it, he could not have advanced. Except for Italian-held Pantelleria, there is no case of any island anywhere in the last war having been surrendered as a result of strategic bombing. Field Marshal Sir William Robinson once told this writer that by actual count the Germans had dropped more bombs on Malta than they had on Britain. But they failed to force the surrender of Malta.

### MacArthur Knows Infantry Advance when Properly Supported

IN 1918, when MacArthur had his first chance to command in battle, he showed from the start that he understood that to send infantry to the attack without proper artillery fire inevitably meant unnecessarily heavy losses even if it did not mean failure.

One of the reasons Lee failed at Gettysburg was because Pegram's artillery fire preparatory to Pickett's charge was primarily directed against the Union artillery instead of the Union infantry.

About the only mistake which can really be charged to U. S. Grant, was that before Cold Harbor he sent a great deal of the Union artillery to the rear because he did not understand that with the increased infantry fire-power of those days, attacking infantry needed the maximum artillery support. Hence the repeated attacks at Cold Harbor were bloody failures, because the Confederate infantry had not been beaten down and held there by the maximum available Union artillery fire.

The development of tanks in the first World War and the development of aviation since, has shown in many battles in Spain, in France, Russia and the Pacific that without the advance of infantry to seize and hold the enemy's position, decisive victory cannot be gained.

While MacArthur was given command of the 84th Infantry Brigade, (eight thousand infantry soldiers in those days), after the Second Battle of the Marne, in which the Rainbow Division participated in both stages, his first battle in command of the brigade was the assault on the St. Mihiel salient. The first day of this battle the Rainbow Division, with the First Division on its left and the 89th Division on its right, broke through the center of the south side of the salient. This had been in German hands since 1914. Yet by sunset of the first day the division was out in the open in the broad plain of the Woëvre on the far side of which was the fortress of Metz—a stronghold since the days of Cæsar.

This writer's artillery command supported General Lenihan's 83rd Infantry Brigade. Prior to the action he visited the various commanding officers on the right and left, and the tank commander. MacArthur was on the right with his P.C. as usual close to the front line. As always, he was calm, competent and looked forward not only to breaking through but also continuing to Metz after the breakthrough.

The tank commander was the then Major George Patton who, twenty-six years later, captured Metz. In the attack Patton rode on top of one of his tanks with no protection from enemy fire. When I talked to him prior to the battle, and asked him what I could do to lend the maximum artillery support, he was full of his usual enthusiasm, and after telling me what I could do to help him with my guns, talked about the time when I had visited John J. Pershing in Mexico and Patton was on his staff.

I WENT along with the support wave of the infantry in order to reconnoiter a new position for my guns to give proper support to the rapidly advancing infantry. It was still digging out the Germans to make them prisoners. I ran into MacArthur, cheerful and confident as always. He asked me where General Lenihan was, and I showed him on the map where the General and I had arranged to meet.

I distinctly remember the clearness of the day with the vast flat Woëvre plain stretching to the eastern horizon and the heights of the Meuse to the left, while watching the artillery barrage in front of the 26th New England Division coming down into the plain from the top hundreds of feet above. They had been assigned this center point of the attack on the western side of the salient. It ran north until it reached the defenses of Verdun, like Metz originally a Celtic fortress conquered by Cæsar.

When I met General Lenihan as arranged, MacArthur and he had a long talk at which I was not present. General Lenihan told me shortly afterward that he and MacArthur had both agreed we had the Germans on the run; that we had broken through the last line of trenches and that there was no reason to stop the advance. Orders had arrived, however, that despite the enthusiasm of officers and enlisted men to continue the advance, we were to stop on the line which we occupied at the end of the day.

We sat on this line for weeks. We wondered why. With our superiority in artillery and the enthusiasm of our infantry due to a quick victory with small losses, we could have kept on going.

Later we learned that Marshal Foch, recently become Supreme Commander of the Allies in title but not in fact, had intended us to keep on going, but that Sir Douglas Haig, commanding the British Army in France, had objected to it, and wanted the emphasis put on the British attack in front of the Channel ports. General Petain and General Pershing had fought for the original plan but were overruled in the same way that Bradley and Patton were overruled in favor of Montgomery's attack in the north in 1944.

In talks with MacArthur, whom I always visited between battles, he clearly showed the fallacy of this strategy. After all, had we captured Metz, we would have been in an excellent position to cut off South Germany from the rest of that country, and also to open the way to the invasion of central Germany via the Moselle Valley. The last attack ordered by Marshal Foch, and stopped by the Armistice, had this objective.

MacArthur said: "As you and I know very well, our objective is the destruction of the German armed forces and not the defense of the British Channel Ports, or of Paris. An army tied down to the defense of geographical locations is like a cavalry horse on a lariat tied to a picket pin. It can go so far and no farther, no matter how much richer the grass is beyond its reach."

The other veteran divisions were pulled out of the line to go to the Argonne. The Rainbow Division was left to hold the center of the line with divisions of less battle experience on the right and left. In order to confuse the enemy, the Rainbow Division was ordered to stage a powerful double raid against the center of the German line, so as to make them think we were going to resume the attack, whereas the real attack was to be in the Argonne.

MACARTHUR was ordered to prepare and execute the double raid, and I was ordered to command the artillery.

The raid was to be made on two German strong points: one a fortified farm, which in France means a group of masonry buildings with walls connecting them; and the other on a village of stone buildings around each of which the Germans had dug

trenches and had put barbed-wire entanglements. MacArthur thoroughly understood what some officers and pilots and many civilians do not—that successful fire is not a question of the tonnage dropped on the enemy, but on what is hit.

He also thoroughly understood that what our ground troops still want today, what our Air Force sometimes fails to give them (only Marine Aviation provides it), is accompanying fire during the infantry advance, after the preparatory fire prior to that advance. The preparatory fire destroys as much as possible, but never yet has destroyed the enemy's infantry. Accompanying fire moves just ahead of the infantry at the same rate at the attack, so that our infantry arrives in the enemy's position before the enemy's infantry has had time to come out of its holes and shoot the daylights out of ours.

If there is no accompanying fire, the time between the cessation of the preparatory fire and the arrival of the infantry is always long enough for the enemy's infantry to come out of its holes undestroyed by the preparatory shelling, and deliver a deadly fire on our attacking infantry. . . . From the Union infantry attacks at Cold Harbor to some of the battles in Korea, this has happened many times.

I had over ninety guns—about as many as Pegram had at Gettysburg. The most careful reconnaissances were made of the enemy's position, and the data for all types of fire for the different batteries prepared. The preparatory and accompanying fire was so accurate and so overwhelming that the German losses included practically all their two garrisons, while we lost less than twenty men killed and wounded.

Throughout all his battles since, there is the same evidence of MacArthur's understanding that the primary purpose of all fire in battle is to help the infantry forward with the minimum loss.

Napoleon said: "The moral is to the physical as three is to one"—something frequently forgotten in this machine age, when too often the soldier is looked upon as a servant of the machine instead of the reverse.

### MacArthur Understands Civilian Soldiers

WHEN Americans were British Colonial soldiers, as large numbers of them were in the Seven Years' War, the British regular soldiers did not get along with them. Some of this feeling has been inherited by our regular army. In each of our wars there has been disagreement between the regulars and the volunteers, or whatever the new troops raised for the war were called.

In the First World War for some time we had three armies: the Regular, the National Guard and the National Army. Finally in 1918 they were merged into the Army of the United States. Too often regular officers did not get along with officers and troops who were not regulars.

There is nothing more important in war than for troops to have such confidence in their commanding officers and generals that they will readily follow them anywhere, and cheerfully accept the sacrifices which battle demands.

MacArthur was one of the regular officers who always understood civilian soldiers, and encouraged them in the belief that they were as good soldiers as any others, and so won their confidence and willingness to follow him. Part of this was due to the fact that MacArthur was born and brought up in the regular army at a time when the majority of the officers and many of the old sergeants were veterans of the Civil War. A very large proportion of the officers had come from the ranks in the Civil War, or like MacArthur's father, had been volunteer officers.

These boys naturally were proud of their fathers' records. And they were proud of the States from which their fathers had come as volunteer soldiers. Also this type of officer, whether father, or the son who is a graduate of West Point, are thoroughly imbued with the old regular army and navy idea. To them, the enlisted men were not just names on pay- or muster-rolls, but were "their people."

Such officers knew all about each of their men; if he had family troubles, they were aware of them and did everything they could to help. They would rescue them from the clutches of overeager and sometimes not too honest civil authorities in the nearest towns and villages. They would loan them money. In other words, they treated them like human beings whom it was their responsibility to help in every way, as well as to make into good soldiers.

MacArthur, brought up in this type of Army, with a father who came from the volunteers after a brilliant war record, always got the devotion of his men. His physical courage in battle added to this. I would like to be present if someone who has slandered him with "Dugout Doug" were to use this expression in a convention of Rainbow veterans.

### MacArthur Knows Linear Defense Is Wrong

THE worst strategical error made by civilians and some amateur strategists in uniform is that of linear defense. By this is meant the idea of drawing a line across what you want to defend, and sitting on it until the enemy attacks and then trying to hold it.

This is wrong for two reasons. *One:* if you sit down on a line running across what you want to defend, what you are trying to defend is destroyed in the subsequent fighting. *Two:* you leave the chance to maneuver in the hands of your enemy while robbing yourself of that opportunity.

FROM the days when firearms first dominated the battlefield, the line of defense, if there is one, must be in front of the object to be defended, if that object is not to be destroyed. This line has moved farther and farther away from the region to be defended, until today the defense of the United States does not belong on our coastlines, but across the Pacific on one side and across the Atlantic on the other—this because of the long range of aviation.

This is why MacArthur is so insistent that Formosa be held, because if our Pacific Coast is not to be bombed, our line of defense begins in the north with Alaska, and should go through the Kuril Islands, Japan, Okinawa, Formosa and the Philippines.

Under International Law, President Roosevelt had not the slightest right to give the Kuril Islands to Russia. Under that law all the former possessions of Japan, even if captured during the fighting, still belonged to that country, because they can only be taken away from her legally when she has signed a treaty of peace agreeing to their being given to one of the victors.

So it is that a great gap between Alaska and Hokkaida, the northernmost Japanese main island, is in the hands of Russia. This, while she steadily prepares against the day when she will invade Alaska, from which all our west coast and even Chicago and Detroit can be reached by Russian bombers.

If we were to lose Korea to the Chinese Communists aided by Russia, the main islands of Japan would have Russia to the north of them in the Kuril Islands, Communist Chinese to the south of them in Formosa, and Communist Chinese (quickly replaceable by Russians) in Korea, only 125 miles away, pointing at their heart. . . .

This writer was once sent on a secret mission which included going to Formosa and the Pescadores Islands, where there is what Formosa lacks, a large harbor where an expeditionary force could be assembled. The attack on the Philippines when it came by sea and air, was from Formosa and the Pescadores Islands.

All MacArthur's actions and reports since 1945 have urged the neces-

*Inchon, in which he made the fullest use of the Navy and of air support, is a military classic.*

sity of holding our line of defense in the Western Pacific. If we yield to British wishes today, we will lose our possessions in the Pacific just as we did in the Washington Arms Conference, 1921-'22, which this writer came home from Europe to attend. At that conference we destroyed a fleet of seven battle cruisers (except two turned into our first two airplane carriers) and six battleships, with no one else making any equivalent sacrifice. These thirteen ships, had they been in existence in 1941, could have destroyed the whole Japanese fleet. Had they been in existence, the Japanese would not have dared to go to war with us. We also gave up the right to continue the fortification of Corregidor and build the lines of defenses across Bataan which would have stopped the Japanese.

The war of 1914-'18 started as a war of movement. In this first stage no trenches were dug. The armies were continuously on the move and fought in the open when they met each other. By the end of 1914 there was a stalemate, during which both sides dug in. That started the terrible and indecisive trench warfare, which continued until the Germans almost broke through the British lines and almost separated them from the French in 1917. And from the end of the war in 1918, all military men tried to evolve a system which would keep war, if it came, a war of movement and prevent another bloody, costly and unsatisfactory indecisive war along a line of trenches.

In talking with MacArthur between battles, he always emphasized the necessity of keeping armed forces on the move and never settling down in trenches. When he was Chief of Staff, at the time when every European general officer and general staff was busily engaged on this problem, with the Germans leading in the search for a solution, MacArthur visited all the countries in Europe except Russia. When he came back to this country, he was up to date in every way about everything being done toward the evolution of the *"Blitzkrieg."*

Shortly thereafter I visited every country in Europe except Russia, where I have been on the blacklist since I went on two campaigns with the Poles in 1920. Everywhere I found the greatest enthusiasm and admiration for the clarity of vision, and the knowledge of military history and military affairs of the American Chief of Staff, MacArthur. . . .

From the beginning of the campaign in Korea, MacArthur made every effort to keep it from settling down into a stagnant but bloody defense of a line across Korea. What is worse, a line along the 38th Parallel has nothing to do with any possible line of defense, but is only an arbitrary line drawn across Korea without any regard to the topographical features which play an important part in any defensive line.

I have been in Korea three times and know the tremendous difficulties in picking any line of defense in such a country. Despite the odds against him, MacArthur succeeded in keeping the fighting a war of movement. His brilliant landing at Inchon, in which he made the fullest possible use of the mobility of the Navy, and of air support, is a military classic. As a result, he succeeded in cutting off large forces of the enemy and driving the rest in headlong flight to the Manchurian border.

The only logical thing for him to do unless he wanted to settle down in a line of defense was to pursue the beaten enemy. If he had settled down in a line of defense across Korea, he would have permitted them to be reinforced by the Chinese in Korea, and subjected to all the dangers of defeat inherent in deliberately adopting a line of defense.

Had the Chinese kept out of the war, he would have had a decisive victory which would have given the diplomats of our State Department and the U. N. the opportunity to make one country of Korea. This is what they have always been talking about. The entry of the Chinese into the war was a deliberate act of aggression, and under all the tenets of International Law this act of the Chinese was a declaration of war against all the nations which had any military force—even only an ambulance company like India—in Korea under MacArthur's command.

Had MacArthur, as so many of our amateur strategists wished, settled down on a line across Korea with the intention of defending it, the overwhelming force of the Chinese would have broken it long ago, just as the Germans in the spring of 1917 broke the British trench lines which they had held for two years in northern France.

MacArthur, realizing the dangers of his position and denied the necessary reinforcements to gain victory, offered to meet his opponents in a discussion of peace terms. Throughout our history the general in command in the field has exercised this right. George Washington talked to Cornwallis; General Scott in Mexico talked to Santa Anna; Grant talked to Lee at Appomattox.

It is doubtful if in history there is another example like Korea, where the commander in the field has both been denied the necessary forces for victory, and at the same time been tied by strategical limitations imposed by political superiors. Only generalship of the highest order has prevented our suffering an ignominious and bloody defeat.

The foreign policy of "containing Russia" is the cause of this situation. It is an example of the age-old fallacious strategical conception of *cordon defense.*

Cordon defense is when one side splits its armed forces into a number of parts and scatters them along a straight or a curved line. The reverse of it is planning to take the offensive, with the amateur strategist's desire to outflank the enemy.

I remember talking to MacArthur once between battles when a redhot campaign was being carried on in Britain with a great deal of support from France and the United States, to flank the enemy by going up from Italy into Austria, or by sending the reinforcements badly needed on the Western Front to land in Salonika to reinforce the Allied line then across northern Greece, to drive up through the Balkans. The inability of that line to advance, though it had been there nearly two years, was the argument used to insist that American reinforcements then sailing for Europe by the hundreds of thousands should not be landed in France, but should be sent to the Balkans. This of course would have left a tremendous gap between the southern end of the line in France and any force operating from Italy or from the Balkans.

The enemy by concentrating on the weakened line in France could try again what he almost did in the spring of 1917, when he just missed cutting the line from the Channel Ports to the Parisian defenses, or while leaving a relatively small force on the defensive in France, could concentrate on the Balkans and drive the Allied line into the Aegean. This writer has flown all over the Balkans. A campaign there would be as difficult as the one in Korea.

The reason Napoleon won so many victories was because the Allies were always advancing on him from many directions, each army following its own direction, and separated from the nearest friendly armies by enormous gaps. Napoleon simply concentrated all the French troops he had in one body and struck and defeated each of these armies in turn before the nearest other one could come to the rescue.

The Nazi victories were due to the fact that the poor strategy of the Allies, until the invasion of Normandy in 1943, allowed them to concentrate practically all their forces against one ally after another, without assistance from the others.

From the downfall of France, Belgium and Holland in 1940, the German strength was concentrated against Russia. The North African campaign, brilliant as some of the actions were, was a side issue, if for no other reason than that such a small fraction of the total Nazi strength was used in this theater.

Strategically, the Russians were right when they kept demanding the invasion of France, because without such an invasion the full strength of the Nazis was concentrated against them, with the result that they almost had been beaten. . . .

The whole policy of containment of Russia is merely a peacetime preparation for the erroneous cordon strategy any time war breaks out. MacArthur's thorough understanding of this is the reason why he insists that there are not two problems, one of the Far East, the other Europe; that there is only one problem: Russia, which occupies a central position including a large part of Europe and a large part of Asia. Therefore the main problem is the best way to keep Russia from taking advantage of this central position.

We are fighting today in Korea with small detachments from some other nations. The French are fighting 2400 miles away in French Indo-China, with the British fighting in the Malay Peninsula six hundred miles from the French and three thousand miles from Korea.

There is growing threat that fighting may break out in Iran, which is four thousand miles as the crow flies from Korea, and 3500 miles by sea across the Indian Ocean from the Malay Peninsula. Yugoslavia is approximately two thousand miles as the crow flies from northern Persia, and five hundred miles from France.

What a strategist job to go to the support of any one of them, which may be attacked any day as was Korea!

The war in Korea exhausted our available reserves. In order to find additional troops to send to Europe, we have kept the strength of the force in Korea below the safety point. The French are complaining that the war in Indo-China has seriously cut into the forces they can raise for the defense of their homeland. The British are complaining that the war in Malaya reduces the armed forces which are available for the defense of western Europe.

The Russians in their central position have armed forces of greater strength than those of the United States and the Atlantic Pact countries put together. In addition, they have satellite forces in all the countries of central Europe and the Balkans except Yugoslavia. China can be included amongst the satellites, as can the troops in Manchuria.

Yet we refuse to use Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist troops. We refuse to use the Spanish armed forces, and we have not yet hit on any plan which will make the German forces from western Germany available. Italy is weak, yet we keep Turkey and Greece outside the Atlantic Pact. We reject Spain, which has the strongest army in Europe after Russia.

While the absence of a first-class railway net throughout the Russian possessions makes the quick movement of large forces between the Far East, Central Asia and Europe difficult, in each of these three main theaters the troops she now has stationed there, plus the satellites avail-

able, enables her greatly to outnumber the troops the Atlantic Pact Allies have. The result is that no tremendous troop movement is necessary to reinforce any one of the three from the others.

The mobility of aviation adds to Russia's ability to take advantage of her central position as against our forces scattered along the tremendous circumference of eastern Asia, the countries bordering on the Indian Ocean, and the Mediterranean in Europe to as far north as Finland, Sweden and Norway.

Hitler's victories were greatly helped by his taking advantage of the mobility of aviation to concentrate greatly superior air forces to support the attack on each country as he took advantage, like Napoleon, of the scattered separated forces of his enemies.

Where the Russians entirely differ from us in aviation strategy is that we make strategic bombing our main force with which to strike the enemy, by attacking not his armed forces but his industries and civilian populations. Under present circumstances our ground forces are really auxiliaries to this type of bombing.

The Russian army, on the other hand, while preparing for a certain amount of strategic bombing, primarily to be used if possible against our industry, considers the main purpose of her air forces is to aid the attack of her tremendous ground forces against the enemy's ground forces and destroy them.

The Russians, like the Germans, give their attacking infantry close aviation support. That does not mean blowing up bridges, trains and trucks and batteries and tanks well to the rear, but does mean that as the infantry advances, dive-bombers bomb everything within two hundred yards of the infantry and move their support forward at the same rate of advance as the infantry. Anyone who has not seen such an attack has no idea of the ferocity of it. This writer first saw it in the Spanish Civil War.

This close support of the infantry was one of the main reasons for the quick German victories. Our Marine Corps aviation gives this type of support; our Air Force talks about it, but doesn't always give it. The British R.A.F. does not give it.

The result of our strategy, as of today, is that such airfields as we have or are preparing are scattered through Europe, North Africa, southern Asia and Alaska, not for the primary purpose of concentrating on the attack of any Russian and satellite force anywhere, but for bombing industrial plants and cities scattered throughout the immense interior of Asia. The strategic bombing forces based on the United States have tremendous distances to fly, and therefore must use up a considerable portion of the weight they can carry for the fuel necessary for such enormous distances, as well as extra members of the crew to afford the relief necessary on such long flights.

In other words, the weak land forces of the Atlantic Pact countries are scattered in small packages from Alaska around Asia and southern and western Europe to England, while our aviation strategy is not based on the concentration of air power at whatever point there may be fighting.

General MacArthur's statement before Congress, and such other information as is available concerning his reports from time to time, shows that he has a thorough appreciation of the false and dangerous strategic position we occupy due to our acceptance of the fallacious cordon system.

## MacArthur Always Air Conscious

MacArthur has always been air conscious. During the battles of 1918 he recognized the value to the Germans of their low-flying machines, which suddenly appeared from behind forests or from over the farthest hill to surprise our infantry and artillery.

When he was chief of staff, he assembled our aviation under one command for the first time in its history. It was trained to be a striking force which the commanding general in the field could use where and when he thought it would do the most damage.

His whole campaign in the Pacific showed that he appreciated the value of aviation support, in that in hopping from island to island, skipping some, the ones he hopped to were always the ones needed to give him air support for the next hop.

However, throughout this campaign he used his aviation as one member of a team of three, the other two members being the ground forces and the sea forces. He used the three of them together to destroy the enemy.

In the campaign from Dagupan down the valley to Manila, he used Marine aviation because he appreciated the fact that they were trained to give close support to ground troops.

Throughout the fighting in Korea MacArthur used bombers to strike in the rear of the enemy up as far as the Yalu River, the northern boundary of Korea, which he was not allowed to cross. However, he did not consider that aviation should be limited to bombing, but also used it to give the ground troops the maximum air support the Air Force—untrained to close support—could safely give ground troops. Of course, wherever he had Marines, they had the close support so important to advancing infantry.

This use of ground forces, sea forces and air forces as a single team, instead of relying primarily upon strategic bombing and using the ground troops and sea forces merely as auxiliaries, is the primary difference between the strategy which MacArthur has always used, and that which was used in the European Theater of War from before we entered until the end. In MacArthur's type of strategy, the primary objective is the destruction of the enemy's armed forces. The type of strategy used in Europe, except by the Russians, and which it is planned to use today against the Russians, is based on the idea that strategic bombing can so destroy the resources of a country that it will have to surrender.

We are relying on strategic bombing today to prevent Russia from overrunning Europe. The decision to do this was by no means unanimous, as everywhere in the military world there are many who can bring the facts and figures to show that this strategic bombing cannot today produce a decisive defeat of the enemy.

MacArthur's vast experience and knowledge of modern war should be used to the utmost to give the American people the right answer as to what strategy they are entitled in order to win, in case of war with Russia, with the least possible loss of life and of treasure.

In order to justify the billions we are spending in time of peace, not only in this country but in foreign countries as well, the right answer is needed to two questions:

The first is: Are we justified in concentrating our military strength in Western Europe while neglecting our line of defense in Asia? Are we facing a war with Russia anywhere and everywhere in Europe and Asia that her central position gives her the opportunity to strike, or are we only facing possible war in Western Europe?

The second question is: Can we win with our present idea of strategy that victory will come by dropping atomic bombs on the industries and population centers in the interior of Russia, with only a small auxiliary ground force and a Navy primarily concerned with convoying the supplies needed for overseas air bases? Or must we raise large ground forces fully supported by aviation trained to give them close support, which is what we will have to face wherever Russia attacks; with aviation bombing not our main effort, but tied in to support the advance of our armies; and with the Navy primarily concerned in amphibious operations similar to the one MacArthur carried out at Inchon, and with the protection of our overseas service of supply?

# The Old Wolf

THEY called Israel Putnam "the Old Wolf." They called him "the Old Wolf," or sometimes "General Wolf," those fine British officers in the North Woods, who lost the battles of the French and Indian War—which Israel might have won. And it was a good name, for he was fierce as a wolf in war, and crafty as a wolf in woodcraft.

The reason that they called him the Old Wolf was partly because of that famous earlier adventure under the Pomfret hills. There Israel had crawled alone down into the wolf's alley under the ledges, to shoot the last wolf in Connecticut dead by the light of her own eyes. That fierce old she-wolf with the autograph of the trap-torn paw had terrified the Colony of Connecticut for years, snarling scornfully at hunters and dogs and guns, at traps and poison. At last she had wantonly massacred seventy of Israel's prize sheep in a single night, and so with five other hunters he had tracked her to the ice-bound Connecticut River and back, till they had driven her into her lair close to her starting-point.

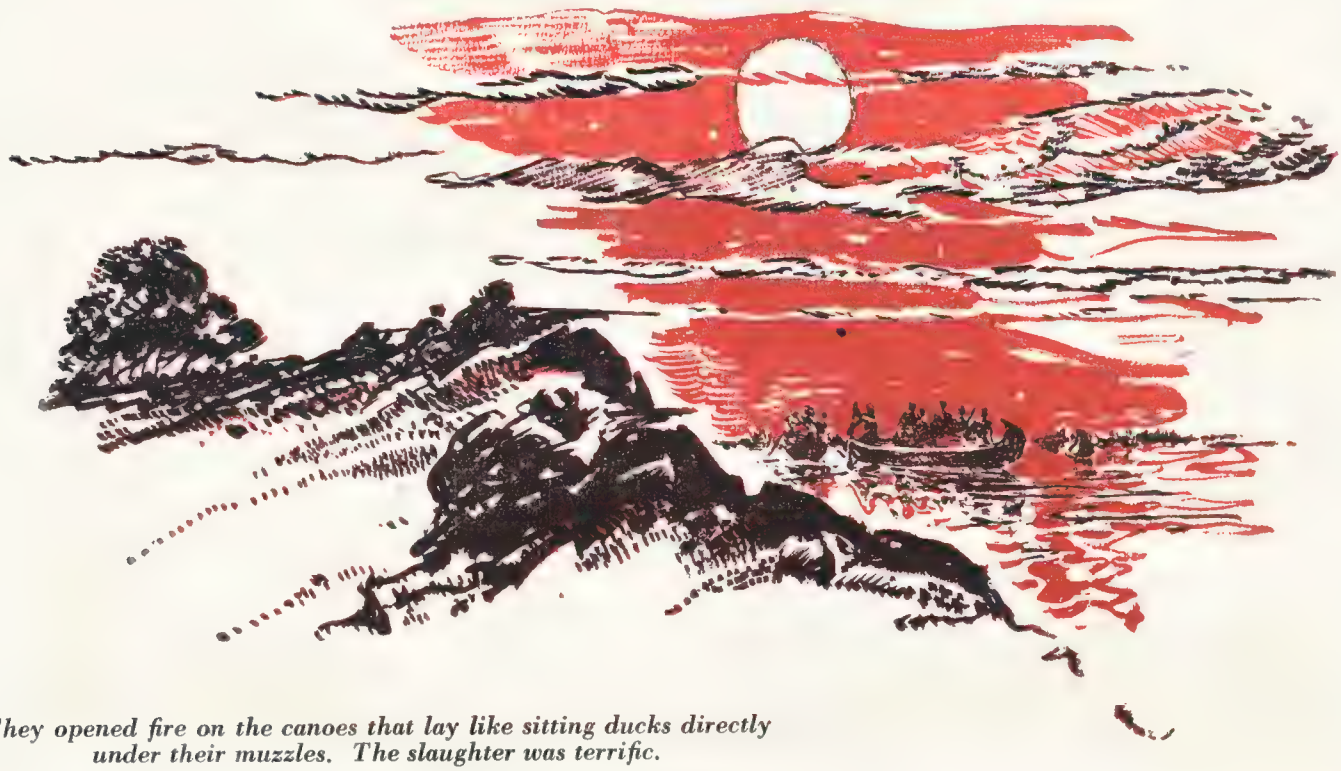
After they had futilely bayed her there for most of a day and most of a night, in her narrow fortress thirty or forty feet under the rocks, the mighty hunters of Pomfret—the big men who had talked big but now did little—were still as far away from her as ever. Then Israel had stripped off his coat, had tied a rope around his leg so they could pull him or his body out, had charged his musket with nine buckshot, and had crept in alone to shoot her by the toss and flare of his torch deep under the hills. So they called him the Old Wolf.

Now Israel Putnam was thirty-seven, and he had answered the desperate call of the Colony of Connecticut for one thousand volunteer soldiers to meet the Frenchmen and the Indians who were howling down upon the Albany frontier.

For thirty-seven years Israel Putnam had lived the life of a quiet Connecticut farmer, before he became one of the great soldiers of America. He had never exploded powder at a human target before. And yet from his first day in the army, he took to war like a natural; he seemed born for battle. The very first autumn of his service, General Phinehas Lyman—that Connecticut lawyer who proved himself the best general in the northern army, if the British had only had the wit to know it—read Israel's talents right, and assigned him to that special force known as the Rangers. And so Israel became at once a comrade and co-officer with that genius of forest warfare, that legendary champion of the woods and the frontier, Captain (later Major) Robert Rogers.

Rogers was a striking and terrible man, six feet tall, with a face like an eagle's, a nose like a jutting crag: he was the toast of the Anglo-American army, the scourge of the Frenchmen and the Indians. The two of them, Rogers and Putnam, made a famous team! They, more than all the pomp and circumstance of the British regiments that offered such scarlet bull's-eyes in the woods, were the shield that protected Albany, and the sword that struck at Crown Point.

Rogers refers to Israel Putnam in his "Journal" as "the blunt and sturdy Captain Putnam"—a perfect characterization. Israel became a captain



*They opened fire on the canoes that lay like sitting ducks directly under their muzzles. The slaughter was terrific.*

**The story of one of the fightingest men America ever produced, the hero of countless battles in the French and Indian wars and in the Revolution.**

# by E. MERRILL ROOT

*"Blunt and sturdy Captain Putnam."*

that first autumn, and rose by his daring and brilliance to be a lieutenant-colonel before the war was over.

The Rangers were the commandos of that day. They were the finest forest fighters the world has known. They were the one untarnished glory on the Anglo-American side during the war, and they are legends in the military history of America. They slipped like death's own shadows through the dangerous woods, dressed in green for camouflage, greased like Indians to shed rain and discourage flies, shod with moosehide moccasins, armed with smoothbore muskets which they loaded with buckshot or with ball, according to the needs of the particular situation. They browned the barrels of their muskets so they would not flash in the sun. They carried a razor-edged tomahawk with a long hickory handle ("skull-cracker" was the contemporary term), a long knife, and for provisions a bag of parched and powdered cornmeal. They could live on the meal for a long time, and then off the country—from moose at best, to mice at worst. They knew edible berries and roots, and the haunts of fish and the ways of deer; but usually on a scout they had to pull their belts patiently tighter and grow lean, rather than venture to disclose their ambush by a shot.

They had tactics beautifully adapted to forest warfare, and still quaintly readable in that classic of war, Robert Rogers' "Journal." They moved in single file, or several widely separated single files, and always spaced so far from man to man that, if one was shot, the second would not be. They never came back by the way they went out, lest they be ambushed. In attack or in retreat, they formed two waves: the second protected the first, after it had fired, by a covering fire—a necessity in those days of slow muzzle-loading. They could even disguise themselves and fish on the lake under the very guns of Ticonderoga or Crown Point, and they would sell their fish to the French soldiers while they spied on the French forts. They could glide in canoes, row the clumsy whaleboats or bateaux, lope all day at the swift tireless wolf-trot of woodsmen, skim on skates after panicky Frenchmen in sleighs, who vainly tried to escape by whipping their spike-shod horses to a gallop; and most of all they could *fight*. They could fight, until the northern Indians called Rogers the Devil, and Putnam the Devil's Disciple.

The Indians hated Rogers so much that when his brother died of smallpox, they did not rest until they had discovered his grave, dug up the disfigured corpse, scalped it, and chopped the body to bits—incidentally sowing the infection of their own death.

Israel Putnam had hardly been assigned to the Rangers before his many adventures began—adventures so varied and so amazing that they seem incredible; yet adventures which are fully documented in the faded ink of old orderly books, of General Winslow's "Journal," of the records of Sir William Johnson's scouts.

In the very first days of his scouting Israel crept under the walls of Crown Point, that frown of stone which was the greatest French stronghold in America, to see what he could see. Somehow in the darkness he stepped on a dead branch, which broke with a snap. Sentries were trigger-happy in that cutthroat country—and several short French muskets blared their buckshot into the night. Israel crept safely away, but the next morning he counted fourteen bullet holes through the blanket roll upon his back.

On another scouting trip, he and Rogers crept together under the walls of Ticonderoga, trying to spy on the Frenchmen in their lairs. As they were returning in the dim light of dawn, a burly Frenchman leaped out of ambush and started to throttle Rogers. Israel did not dare to fire—not only was the fort too near, but also he might kill his comrade rather than his enemy; so he brought the heavy brass-shod butt of his musket against the Frenchman's skull. As the fellow fell, Rogers scalped him (both sides scalped the dead in those hearty days!), and the two Rangers escaped into the woods.

Israel Putnam had to learn the tricks of guerrilla war in the northern woods—the forfeit, if he lost, being his scalp. British and Provincial troops when they camped in the woods spread a ring of fires widely around their central camp, and set their sentries by the fires, to pace visibly by their light. The French, on the other hand, built their central fires compactly, and then spread a web of sentries far out in the peripheral darkness of the woods. While Israel was still an apprentice of war, he and his bravest comrade, Lieutenant Robert Durkee, not yet familiar with the French custom, approached one of their camps. Before they knew their danger, Indian sentries were at them out of the shadows, and they had to run for their lives.

Guns flared through the darkness behind and around them. Durkee got one buckshot through his thigh, though fortunately it did not prevent him from running. Israel was ahead, and in the darkness he slid into a pit of clay; before he could rise, a man was on top of him; his knife was almost into the man, when Durkee managed to speak before the knife struck. So they both crawled out of the clay alive. They hid at last behind a huge fallen log, to wait for morning. Toward dawn, Israel decided that the drink in his canteen would never taste better than at that moment, so he raised it to his lips. But the canteen was dry: a bullet had cut through it, spilling the good rum.

One of Israel's most piquant exploits was famous in the army. At a certain camp, nearest to the French posts and therefore most exposed, a stealthy raider crept in every night to slit a throat and steal a musket. The sentries at one particular spot were found every morning stiff in the dew or the frost, with throats cut from ear to ear. The commanding officer had given strict orders that the sentry must call out *three times*, at any suspicious

*The Rangers ran after the three, hoping to take them alive for questioning.*

sound or movement: "Who goes there?" Only after he had called his challenge *three times* was he to fire! But each sentry, each morning, was found dead. The post became a death-sentence: soldiers preferred court-martial to serving there; and the bravest volunteered—only to die. Then Israel Putnam (though as a captain he was excused from sentry duty) asked for the post. He looked the ground over, measured the distances, and loaded his musket with a ball and nine buckshot. Then like a shadow he trod his sentry-round in the darkness. Nothing happened to disturb him until almost dawn; then he saw a darker shadow moving among the shadows, and heard a noise that he himself said was "like a hog chewing acorns." Hé stopped at once, pointed his gun at sound and shadow, called quickly: "Who goes there *three times?*" and fired. The camp exploded into activity and lights. They found a huge Indian, dressed in a bearskin, shot through the heart. That camp was not disturbed again.

Israel Putnam learned all about the tactics of the northern Indians. He learned that when they fled before a larger pursuing party, they always left a dozen of their swiftest young men hidden in a thicket just at the top of a hill. If the pursuing party came rushing heedlessly on, these would pour in a sudden close volley that staggered the pursuit, and then go loping off with the downward slope of the hill to help them. But if the pursuers were too cautious, delaying and waiting, much time was lost and the main body of the Indians would escape. The only tactics, he found, to meet this situation was to send a small body of Rangers, picked for their swiftness and their sharp sight, loping ahead; these must mingle boldness and caution in just the right proportion, and uncover the ambush without the loss of men on the one hand or time on the other. When the road was safe, they called to the main body to come by giving the strange, hissing cry of *"O-wish!"*—the *O* almost quiescent, the *wish* sibilantly hissing.

Israel also learned that when Indians broke into smaller parties, they left one runner for each party at the point of separation, so that if pursuit came, a swift runner could carry the warning to every group.

MANY of the Rangers' days were spent in lonely scouting, which was a game of tag with death. Again and yet again, with a few Mohawks or a small party of chosen Rangers, Israel acted as the eyes and the ears of the army. General Winslow called him "our best scout, whose word is absolutely to be trusted," and indeed Israel seems to have known more about the total designs and doings of the French than most of *them* did—except perhaps Montcalm.

On one such excursion (October, 1755), he skirted the lake toward Ticonderoga, counting the bark canoes and the bateaux that he saw, noting their contents and direction, and listening (out of a nearby thicket) to the sound of "cutting, hewing, adzing, and sawing," where a party of Frenchmen were working on further fortifications and talking and laughing as heartily as if they were safe in Paris. Israel and his men listened uneasily to the barking of dogs, wondering when the keen brutes might strike their own trail. They saw thirty Indians come out on the beach, within musket-shot, camp there and relax, unaware—keen as they were—of the proximity of their most hated enemies. Thus he penetrated again and again to the very doors of Ticonderoga, or scouted Crown Point as nonchalantly as if it were friendly ground.

On one such jaunt he scouted even the houses along the lake near Crown Point, and then hid three of his men in a French barn that was filled with wheat. With only one comrade, chosen for special bravery and skill, he went on nearer to the fort to do his most dangerous and delicate scouting. He counted the tents, the boats, the guns, the very sentries on the walls, the canoes passing up and down the lake, and the Frenchmen going about what he quaintly called "their secular affairs." He watched Indians, in their more playful moments, engage in a game of ball—with human skulls for the balls. Finding a good place to ambush (within "sixty rods" of the walls of Crown Point itself), he went back and "took his partners" with him from the barn, set an ambush, and lay

in hiding all that night and till about ten of the next morning.

Then a Frenchman came strolling out of the fort without his gun, and approached within "fifteen rods" of where they lay; Israel, wishing to take the fellow back alive as a source of information, ran silently, with one man, after him to "captivate" him. But the Frenchman refused to "take quarter," so they reluctantly killed him and took his scalp in plain sight of the fort. Then they escaped into the woods, climbed a mountain for their observation post, studied the large encampments around it, and listened to the firing of small arms (probably in target practice). They judged that there were at least two thousand Frenchmen in Crown Point; having gathered a store of such information, they found their own canoes still safely hidden, and returned with much valuable information—and with one scalp!

One month later (November, 1755), Israel was again on a scout, this time coolly observing Ticonderoga. He had a "very fair prospect of the fort and camp," which was large—evidently denoting a numerous garrison. After studying the French power at his leisure, as nonchalantly yet as carefully as if he were making a practice maneuver, he started to scout the "Advance Guard" of the French, which lay some distance outside and ahead of the port. As he and his men flitted noiselessly through the woods, they saw three Frenchmen traversing the military road without any suspicion of danger. The Rangers ran after the three, hoping to take them alive for questioning; but the Frenchmen fired at them, did some "very good running," and with the aid of a large log over which they leaped, they managed to escape. The Rangers ventured to fire upon their fleeing foes, then escaped into the woods, and climbed a mountain whence they watched the Advance Guard buzzing like a hornets' nest roused by a stone.

On this scout, while lying in ambush by the side of a trail, Israel watched thirteen Indians in full war paint pass so close that he could have touched them with a fish-pole.

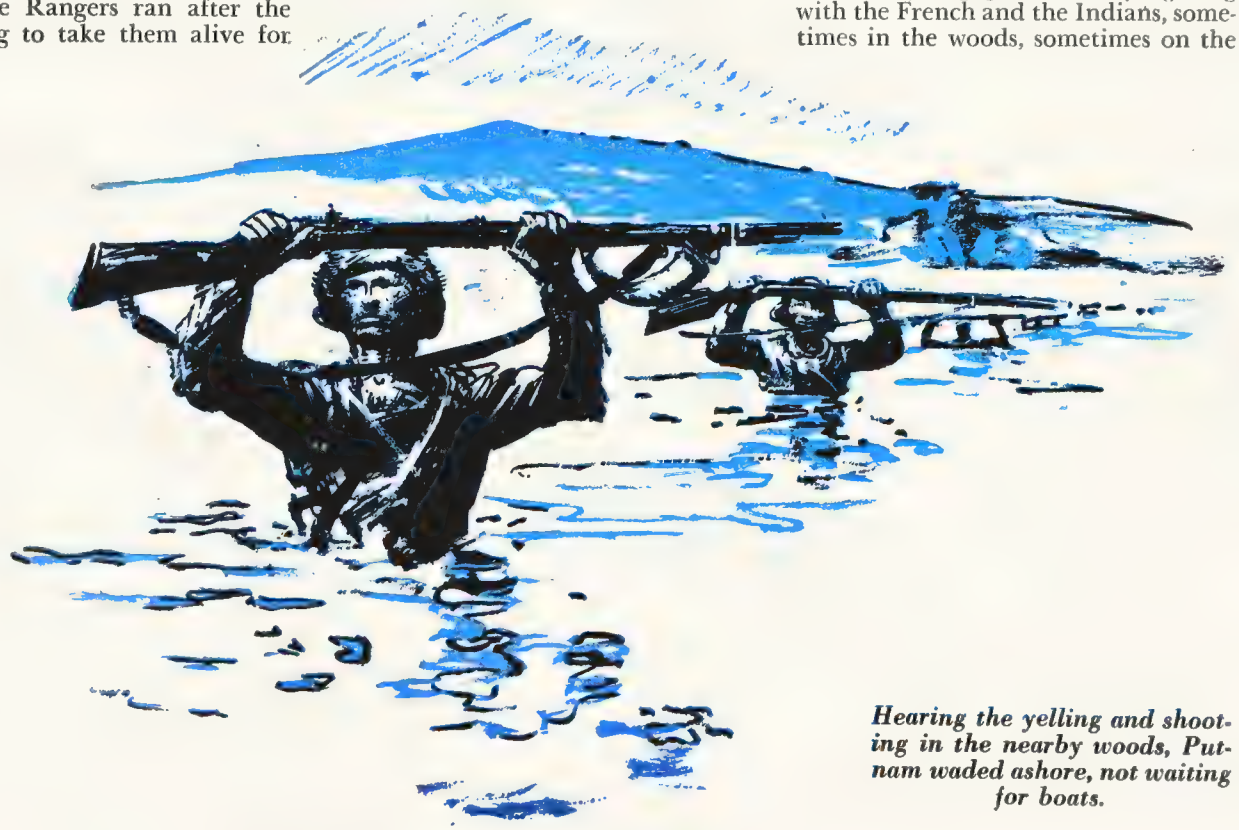
One of Israel's favorite tactics as a scout was to climb the several high mountains that jutted up like observation towers close above the French forts; thence, perhaps climbing a tall pine both for concealment and for better observation, he would stare down and memorize all the French numbers and activities. Such was the Intelligence work of the Rangers.

Always a scouting party was in deadly peril, from the moment it left the walls of Fort Edward or Fort William Henry till the moment it entered the walls again. A moment's folly, an instant's carelessness, would mean death—perhaps a terrible death by torture. At any moment the Indians, keen as hounds upon the scent, might take Israel's trail; at any hour, the Indians might fire on him from rock or tree, or leap out on him from the ambush of the next thicket. It was dangerous, deadly work; but Israel loved it.

Hardly had the Rangers returned from one scout before the uneasy generals would send them out upon another. The generals wanted Israel always to gather new information—but they never seemed quite bright enough to use that which he brought in. It was Israel, for example, who discovered Montcalm's attack in force against Fort William Henry—discovered it by boldly advancing up Lake George in two boats, and leaving one ostensibly fishing on the open lake while he carried information back in the other. He told General Webb that the French were out in full force, with regulars by the thousand, with bateaux loaded with cannon, with swarms of wild Indians, to reduce the fort. But Webb's only use of the information was to flee in panic to Fort Edward, compelling Israel to accompany and guard him, leaving Fort William Henry to needless capture and horrible massacre. Israel had to learn about English generals the hard way, suffering from the cowardice of the yellow Webb, and seeing good men and strong forts thrown away by incompetence and fear.

Thus for three years of constant danger, forest adventure, and footloose scouting, Israel literally walked the valley of the shadow; but he always came back, and he was always ready and even eager for more.

The Rangers did not, however, do only scouting. They were sent out in force to maraud, and they were sent out in force to punish French and Indian marauders. Thus again and again they engaged in heavy fighting with the French and the Indians, sometimes in the woods, sometimes on the



*Hearing the yelling and shooting in the nearby woods, Putnam waded ashore, not waiting for boats.*

*Illustrated by* JOHN FULTON

*The Indians fired shot after careful shot, but not a single bullet struck Israel.*

lakes, sometimes amid the stinging flies of summer, sometimes on skates or snowshoes.

Once Rogers and Putnam had been sent out to pursue a large raiding party, which they overtook and punished heavily. But as they returned, they were themselves pursued and overtaken by a greatly superior force of French and Indians from nearby Ticonderoga. One large party of Indians even got ahead of them, and put out in canoes to intercept them; another large party of Indians was close at their heels, also in canoes. The savages so evidently outnumbered the Rangers that they threw aside their usual cunning and fearlessly closed in for the kill, expecting easily to wipe out their hated enemies at last. But the Rangers had concealed "wall-pieces" (light portable cannon of the day) in their boats: as the Indians paddled in close, they opened fire with the wall-pieces, blowing the canoes to bits, and slaughtering Indians by the scores. It was one of the bloodiest defeats the Indians had ever sustained, and Rogers and Putnam did more to punish the Indians who had pursued them even than they had been able to do to those they had pursued.

In another of these miniature naval battles, Rogers' party, in canoes on the lake, drove a fleet of Indian canoes against the shore where Putnam lay in ambush with wall-pieces. Israel did "noble execution," almost wiping out the war party.

At another time, Israel Putnam, in chief command of a party of Rangers, laid an ambush at the mouth of Wood Creek on the shores of Lake George. He had seen no French and Indians in the woods or on the lake, and his men had run out of provisions and were very hungry. A fat buck strolled too close to their hidden guns, and teased them into venturing a shot. They feasted on venison—but revealed their presence. The famous French partisan leader, Marin (called by the Rangers "Malong," and named by them "The Indian General") had been stealing cautiously along the shores of the lake in canoes with five hundred Indians. Warned by the shot that enemies were abroad in the woods, he immediately landed and hid until night, then started cautiously along the shore. Reaching Wood Creek, he ordered the canoes to enter it and camp for the night.

The moon was full. Israel could see the hovering canoes glide and group close under the rocky shore and examine it for enemies before they landed. He carefully set his sixty men; then at his signal, they opened fire on the canoes that lay like sitting ducks directly under their muzzles. The slaughter was terrific. Israel later learned, while a prisoner of the French at Montreal, that some two hundred Indians had been killed or very badly wounded. But Marin and the three hundred survivors still vastly outnumbered Israel's sixty; they fought their way ashore at last, outflanking the Rangers. Israel thereupon ordered a retreat, which was so successful that he escaped with a loss of only three men.

As the jubilantly retreating Rangers approached Fort Edward, they were ambushed by Provincial Light Infantry—who took them for French and fired a volley. Seeing his mistake almost as soon as he had made it, the commanding officer came running forward to shout that he was indeed sorry that he had taken them for foes and fired on friends. "Friend or foe," replied the blunt and sturdy Israel, "you deserve all to be hanged for missing us when you had so fair a shot!"

PUTNAM was no robot soldier, no martinet of automatic obedience. Once General Phinehas Lyman sent out one hundred woodchoppers to fell timber for the fortification of Fort Edward. They were guarded by fifty Light Infantry. But a stealthy war party of Indians came creeping down through the woods till they were too close at hand to miss, then sent a volley of arrows into the axemen. The survivors fled in panic, only to run into a well-laid ambush that decimated them with another flight of arrows. The scalping knife and the tomahawk were busy, and only the Indians' desire to harvest scalps saved the survivors from immediate death. The soldiers rallied around the woodchoppers and beat off the Indians for a time; but the savages vastly outnumbered them, were invisible in the thickets, and would have taken their time to annihilate the party to the last man.

Israel Putnam at the time was camped with his Rangers on a little island in the Hudson, just outside the fort. Hearing the yelling and shooting in the nearby woods, he shouted to his men to follow; not waiting for boats, he waded ashore, holding his gun high over his head. General Lyman, from the walls of Fort Edward, shouted to him to enter the walls, as he feared it was too dangerous to meet the Indians in the woods. Israel, however, shouting back a hasty apology half lost in his speed, plunged with all his men into the dangerous woods. He struck the Indians with furious impact, surprising them in turn and tossing them into a panic. The Rangers drove the savages from their slaughter and their scalps, and had good hunting until sunset.

When Israel returned, he expected court-martial. But General Lyman, himself no robot general, summoned him to headquarters to *commend* him, saying that his orders had been advisory, not mandatory, and that Israel had done right to ignore them at the dictates of his superior knowledge of woodcraft and Indian war.

Israel Putnam had many other more personal adventures. Once he had rowed with a few Rangers across the Hudson to make a scout. Just below the place where he had landed his heavy bateau were the terrible rapids above Fort Miller—a fearful descent of rocks and white water that no boat had ever survived. A Ranger came loping in to say that Indians were in the woods, and were even converging in a rapid fan upon the scouting party. Escape through the woods was quite impossible; escape by the clumsy heavy bateau directly across the river would not carry them swiftly enough out of the range of bullets, so the only road to safety led downward through the deadly danger of the never-before-traversed rapids. Israel chose that way at once. While his men expostulated and then cowered in terror in the bottom of the boat, not daring to look at the steeplechase of death that they were riding, Israel steered the boat into the quick water. The Indians ran out on the rocks that he had left, knelt at their ease, and fired shot after careful shot. But not a single bullet struck Israel as his boat tossed in the wild water; nor did a single rock gash the boat with its fang. He steered the tossing boat safe through the bullets, the waves and roaring foam, the teeth of the rocks, and reached the calm water below unharmed. Before the descent was half over, the Indians had ceased to shoot: such a man, they said, could not be harmed: he was under the protection of the Great Spirit.

That winter the barracks at Fort Edward caught on fire. They burned to the ground, while the fierce wind blew sparks and flame against the adjacent powder-magazine where tons of death lay under a thin sheathing of bark and boards. Soldiers and officers went streaming out of the gates, even Israel's friend the brave Colonel Haviland, leaving the fort to its fate—and the Albany frontier also. But Israel, nothing daunted, caught up a bucket of water and sprang onto the roof of the powder-magazine. He shouted to the soldiers to form a bucket-brigade; his courage shamed officers and men into returning. Colonel Haviland himself ordered them back, saying: "If we must be blown up, let us all be blown up together!" Israel on the roof fought the flames for over an hour, dipping his hands into the water to keep the mittens on them from being burned off; even so, one pair was burned off—as well as his eyebrows and most of his hair. And when the fire was finally extinguished and he could climb down, most of the skin came off his hands as he drew off the second pair of mittens.

Death, indeed, was always around the Rangers. In their scouting and fighting they had to face the clean quick death of bullet or knife, and also the horrible death of the torture-stake. Once when Israel had fought off six hundred French and Indians with sixty Rangers, three of his men were captured in the retreat. General Lyman led a rescue party to his aid, and they found that two of the men had been carried into captivity; the third, however, had been left behind in this sorry shape: "The third they found barbecued at a most doleful rate, for they found him with his nails pulled out, his lips cut off down to his chin and up to his nose, and his jaws laid bare; his scalp was taken off, his breast cut open, his heart pulled out and his bullet-pouch put in the room of it; his left hand clasped round his gall, a tomahawk left in his bowels, and a dart stuck through him; the little finger of his left hand cut off, and the little toe of his left foot cut off." Such were the modes of death that

***Putnam did not dare fire, so he brought the heavy brass-shod butt of his musket against the Frenchman's skull.***

were possible in a Ranger's work day!

The life offered little material reward. A Ranger wrote: "The commanding officer told us that if we still stand as Rangers, we should have three dollars per month allowed us extraordinary, and a half a pint of rum when we scouted. The rum we get sometimes, but the money we never see."

The great motivation of the true Ranger like Israel was the knowledge that he was serving his country and saving his people from the tomahawk and the scalping knife, and the red death howling down on the frontier. There was also a subtler motivation for men like Rogers and Putnam—the love of bold men for the bright eyes of danger, the heady delight of the wild forest life, the great game of war. Israel Putnam was a kind and a sensitive man, who could weep to see a friend like Captain Nathaniel Whiting shot through the brain, and who often cared for wounded Frenchmen as if they were his own brothers; but he loved adventure, danger, ranging the woods, the excitement of war. . . .

So for three great years Israel was the old wolf of the woods, the champion of the army, the Ranger par excellence. Then in 1758, a year very unfortunate for the Anglo-American army as a whole, he had his personal disaster. Israel Putnam was himself captured by the Indians.

Robert Rogers had led a party of Rangers and Light Infantry after a French marauding party, and Israel was with him. They could not catch the culprits nor discover any fresh rascals, so Rogers swung back up Wood Creek to the clearing where old Fort Anne (a British stronghold in a former war with the French, but now abandoned) had stood. They camped there overnight. In the morning, Rogers broke his own rules by engaging in a target-match with pistols. He and Lieutenant Irwin of the Light Infantry tried to settle a dispute about their marksmanship. The unwise *bang, bang* of the pistols warned Marin, "the Indian General," who was lurking in the woods with some four hundred Indians. Marin laid an ambush. Around the old fort, for the circumference of a mile, the trees had once been cut down and even the stumps burned; but now the forest was growing up again, a thick almost impenetrable tangle of branches and shrubs and crowding small trees. Only one narrow Indian path traversed this maze.

Marin set his ambush where the single narrow path debouched into the clear open woods.

By Rogers' orders, Putnam led with the Connecticut Rangers. Captain Dalzell followed with the Light Infantry. Rogers brought up the rear with the rest of the Rangers. Israel knew his danger well, and recalled the unwise target practice with apprehension, but there was nothing he could do in that blind path but walk softly. He even uncocked his gun, lest a thrusting twig should discharge it.

He had reached the point where the path would open into woods and he could see, when a sudden volley rang out. The man behind Israel fell dead; others were killed or wounded. A huge chief sprang at Israel, knife in hand. Israel cocked his gun in one swift motion, and pulled the trigger with a muzzle at the chief's breast; but the priming had spilled in the thickets, so the gun snapped harmlessly. This was fortunate, for if Israel had shot the chief, he himself would immediately have been cut down.

Overwhelmed by the rush of the Indians, who were more eager to take prisoners for torture than to kill outright, Putnam was trussed in a trice like an animal for slaughter, and bound to a tree at the edge of the open woods. While the Rangers and the Light Infantry counter-attacked, and the battle hung in the balance for over an hour, Israel was strung up there helpless, midway between the blazing guns of friend and foe. Bullets struck off his cap, cut through his hunting-shirt, even nicked his skin; yet not a single bullet wounded him seriously.

*That night the Indians decided to liquidate their famous and terrible foe with proper decorum.*

At first Captain Dalzell and the Light Infantry drove the Indians back a little into the woods; then the Indians drove Dalzell back in turn, and surrounded Israel again. A Frenchman, angered by the first repulse, set his gun against Israel's breast and pulled the trigger; but the piece only snapped and did not blow his life out. A young Indian brave tried his skill with the tomahawk, tossing the sharp little blade repeatedly at Israel's head to test the prisoner's nerve and to see how close he could come without killing.

In spite of their advantage of ambush and first fire, the French and Indians were outnumbered and eventually outfought. First Dalzell, then Rogers, broke through the sea of branches like swimmers in a strong surf, struck first at the Indians' center and then at their flanks, until the Indians broke off the battle and fled. But as they fled the Indians took Israel with them; they loaded him with the packs of their wounded, bound his hands so that he could not beat off the flies, and goaded him to run with the prick of the naked knife.

At last he would run no farther: he stood still and bade them kill him at once and be done with it, rather than to torture him further. His captor, grunting a grudging admiration, untied some of the heavy packs, and let him drink from a forest spring.

That night the Indians decided to liquidate their famous and terrible foe with proper decorum. So they tied him, stripped naked, to a large tree; heaped faggots about his feet; and lit rolls of birchbark under the wood. But hardly had the blaze got a good start, when a sudden fierce thunder-shower brought heaven's bucket-brigade into action and extinguished the fire to the last ember. The Indians tried again after the storm was over, but their yelling and dancing had wakened Marin, who scattered the branches at the risk of his own life and forbade the torture.

ISRAEL did not lose his humor even at the torture-stake. He said later that he could not help laughing at the antics of the dancing Indians, and that he kept thinking what a picture an artist could make of "this poor bound Samson in the hands of these tawny Philistines!"

In the process of the attempted torture, he received one blow from a tomahawk that cut his cheek open with a painful wound; he bore the scar to his grave.

If the Indians could no longer torture him, they still could tease him. Once they loaded an old musket with a double charge, then fired it close over his head while he lay asleep. But Israel merely turned over on his other side, muttering aloud: *"That's a good one!"*

*The sentries at one particular spot were found every morning with throats cut from ear to ear.*

EARLY in 1759, Israel Putnam was set free in an exchange of prisoners. He returned—a Major now—to join the staff of the tenacious, aggressive General Geoffrey Amherst, who, now in charge of the northern army, proceeded to sweep the French into Canada and to pursue them even there.

As Amherst invaded Canada by way of the Saint Lawrence, Israel was of great aid to him. At one point Amherst's superior army—dependent for transportation on the river, and equipped only with light whaleboats and trumped-up clumsy transports—was checked completely by a couple of French cruisers that patrolled a narrow part of the river.

Israel Putnam devised the means of their elimination. He came to Amherst and asked leave to attack the sloops by night with a boatload of chosen Rangers, some wooden wedges, and several "beetles" (great wooden mauls used for the driving of stakes). Amherst could not imagine what Putnam would do with these strange ingredients of attack, but he gave permission and provided the means. That night, with muffled oars, Israel and his daring companions rowed softly under the stern of first one cruiser and then the other, drove their wooden wedges firmly in on either side of the rudders, and left the sloops to wind and water. Dawn soon came, and then General Amherst saw the sloops, with sails fluttering in vain, driving helplessly straight ahead, till they hit the shore. They were easily taken there, and the road to Montreal lay open.

Israel Putnam also devised the means to capture several heavily fortified islands, equipped with heavy artillery and ringed with an impenetrable abatis of sharpened spines of wood. He fashioned for the whaleboats an armor of oak planks, so thick it could not be penetrated by musketballs and so high that it would protect the crouching soldiers. The boats also had, at the prow of each, a long wide plank of oak, swiveled at one end and worked by a pulley. This plank could be lowered like a drawbridge; as it fell, it pressed the abatis down, and over it the soldiers could charge the island. The French defenders were so amazed and even frightened by these engines—like the proboscis of an elephant, they thought—that they hauled down the flag and surrendered without even trying to beat off the attack.

But even after he had helped to capture Canada, Israel Putnam was not weary of adventure. So he joined the Colonial forces—Connecticut contributed the largest share, one thousand men—that sailed in 1762 to rescue a large British task force which had been futilely besieging Spanish Havana in Cuba. There he was shipwrecked, but saved all his men; fought his way by mine and trench into the heart of El Moro, the chief Spanish fort; and marched at last triumphantly into captured Havana. He learned to smoke cigars, and brought the habit back to Connecticut; saved a poor beaten slave, who was being lynched by a Havana mob, and gained a lifelong servant and a friend for life; and, with the other "Gentlemen Adventurers" (as the American volunteers were called) he was granted a

"comfortable sum" in gold and jewels from the spoils of Havana.

Such was "the Old Wolf" of that picturesque and historically crucial war—the French and Indian War, which really lies at the very roots of the history of the United States of America.

And the rest of Israel Putnam's life belongs even more clearly to America,—to the United States of America, which he so loyally and brilliantly served and helped to create by dream and deed.

We Americans should never forget that the Old Wolf was one of the first to see the American Revolution around the next corner of history, and one of the first both to see and to seek a new nation conceived in liberty. And it was the Old Wolf who, though fifty-seven, rushed off to war with the battle-wisdom of a veteran and the enthusiasm of a boy.

He rode to "the relief of Boston," from Brooklyn, Connecticut to Concord (and then on to Cambridge), Massachusetts, some seventy-five miles, between a sunset and a sunrise.

And it is good to remember that at the Battle of Bunker Hill (which he had visioned and planned, and which he would have won if Artemus Ward, the general-in-chief, had sent him the reinforcements he had promised), the Old Wolf was in the thick of things. As a column of Welsh Fusiliers came suddenly through the smoke of burning Charlestown, to infiltrate a gap in the American lines, Israel himself rode up to some cannon the artillery-shy Americans had abandoned, and served and fired them with his own hands, even loading them with a shovel and loose powder when he found the cartridge-bags provided were too big for the bore. The general-in-chief drove the Fusiliers back with his own personal gunnery!

We should remember, too, the last military exploit of the Old Wolf, when he was sixty-two, just before partial paralysis deprived him of a share in the final victories of the Revolution. Israel had spent the winter of 1779 at Connecticut's Valley Forge, the camp at Redding, keeping the embers of the Revolution alight among the dispirited and even mutinous Connecticut troops. When March came, he was ready to parry or to strike the British in New York. Governor Tryon, the British commander there, had a bad habit of marauding along the Connecticut coast to destroy the works which manufactured salt from seawater. Salt, very scarce and dear in Colonial economy, was a necessity not only to season food but to preserve meat for the American army. March 2, 1779, Tryon set out with a detachment drawn from three British and one Hessian regiment, plus a contingent of hard-riding dragoons, the best horsemen in the British army. He advanced against slight opposition, driving in the American patrols from New Rochelle to Rye Neck, and thence toward Greenwich. Israel himself was there, gathered all available men, and met the onslaught with his inferior but unintimidated force. He drew up the American troops, with a couple of field-pieces, beside a church at the top of a high hill.

The wily British, however, began a flanking maneuver. Israel's own report reads: "They came on briskly, and I soon discovered that their design was to turn our flanks and possess themselves of a defile in our rear, which would effectively prevent our retreat."

Thereupon the Old Wolf sent his troops down the relatively easy slope of the hill on their right, and held the ground alone, firing the field-pieces in the face of the dragoons. They fanned out with such speed that his own escape was cut off on the right, till his only chance was the desperate remedy of riding to the left down the slope of the hill so steep that it has been variously described as a "cliff" and a "precipice." It is difficult to know just what it was like then, for the years and men have changed the contours of things; it seems to have been a rocky face of earth down which rude steps had been cut so that hardy men could climb up, on foot, to church. It was so steep that only goat-footed climbers attempted it, and never on horseback but only on their own feet. Now Israel, caught at last it seemed by the converging dragoons, turned his horse to the descent and went plunging down. Only a superb rider could have kept his seat and guided his horse; only a horse that trusted his rider would have obeyed; only a man of the utmost audacity would have dared the ride. The final proof of his audacious skill is that the tough, saddle-happy dragoons—though they recognized him and would have endeared themselves to Tryon if they could have captured him—drew rein at the rim. They sat their horses on the safe edge, firing their pistols at the stout general who had dared the plunge, and even shooting his hat off. (Tryon, in a gesture of chivalry, sent him a new one to take its place!) So the Old Wolf escaped once more by choosing the lonely road of danger.

America should never forget the Old Wolf. For he was the kind of man out of whom great history and great nations are made.

*Putnam called quickly: "Who goes there* three times?" *and fired. That camp was not disturbed again.*

*Illustrated by* CARL BURGER

# SEA BEAST

**A story of that little-known giant of the American coasts, the Sea Elephant.**

## by PAUL ANNIXTER

IT was a day of rain-fogs and low-hanging mists through which the heaving face of the sea showed a sullen, smoky gray. Somewhere the sun was struggling to shine, and through occasional rifts in the obscurity loomed the lonely, desolate cliffs of south Tasmania, that wild and melancholy coast that is lashed for more than half the year by bitter Antarctic gales. A half-mile offshore lay a little unnamed islet which sea, rocks and storm had prisoned beyond man's conquering.

Under cover of the fog and pounding surf this day a herd of the weirdest creatures left on earth were landing there. Amid the thundering diapason of wind and sea rose a tremendous roaring as of a troop of lions in combat. It ended in a series of whistling grunts, sighs and subterranean coughings reminiscent of vast monsters when the world was young. High up on the rocky cliffs above the beach, sea birds could be heard wheeling and mewing in a reflex of excitement.

It was not until sunset that the flying mist and scud lifted like a giant drop curtain disclosing the newcomers—a herd of twenty-one gigantic sea elephants lying in a row on the narrow rock-strewn beach. With the closing in of the long Antarctic winter they had traveled northward from the bleak tenantless shores of Wilkes Land and Little America to this old familiar wintering place. Here, where man rarely came, where the only sounds were the bird calls and the lugubrious dirge of the sea, they would spend the months of winter. Every animal in the herd was fat and well conditioned after a summer of ceaseless hunting and roaming in the fecund waters of the Antarctic. Beneath their grayish wrinkled hides, which were more than three inches thick and the toughest in all the animal world, incredible stores of vitality were a-crawl, fuel for these indolent days of basking and resting.

Neither a fish nor a true seal, nor yet a true mammal, the sea elephant is one of the anomalies of nature. Around twenty-five feet in length, he is second only to the whale in bulk among upper sea folk; and to the uninitiated he stands for the king of the Antarctic regions. Yet this is anything but true. Like the manatee, his distant cousin, he is mild and inoffensive by nature, formidable only in size, with no means of defense other than

his jaws, which his enemies find it easy to elude. All in all, he is a pitiful example of enforced adaptability, and one of the most harried of creatures.

In the fitful sunlight the line of vast beasts on the shore had the appearance of unfinished monsters left over from some other age, which, as a matter of fact, they were. Before the dawn of any history we know, and before the advent of man at all, the ancestors of the sea elephants were strictly land animals who matched caution against the ferocity of the cave lion and saber-tooth tiger. Outmatched as were all other creatures by these slayers, they were driven to take to the water to survive, and in time became marine beasts, but never so fully or happily as their relatives the seal and walrus. Fifty years ago, before the white man ravaged their numbers for their hides and oil, the tribe of sea elephants were numerous in both hemispheres. They frequented the west coast of North America as far as to California; but now, like the dugong and certain of the whales, their tribe is facing extinction, and this was one of the last herds to be found in those waters.

Unbelievably vast, ugly and shapeless they appeared as they lay resting from their long journey. They possessed no tusks like their cousins, the walrus, but to add to their uncouthness each of the vast bulls of the herd had his nose prolonged into a pouch-like appendage which rose and inflated in rage or excitement giving a new and ferocious aspect to the beasts. Almost as helpless as so many snails on land, their short flippers, unable to support their immense weight, spread out at right angles beneath them. They ranged in size from the small seven-hundred-pound calves of the previous season, to the gigantic bulk of old Matwa, the leading bull, who weighed close to four thousand pounds.

As the sun came out palely for a brief interval before setting, a mighty din arose from the herd. It swelled in volume to a subterranean roar which shook the very ground, ending in a series of coughing grunts, barks, sighs and whistles. It was only the bull elephants' way of voicing their pleasure at their return to the familiar beaches on which they had wintered for eight years. As the salvo of sound subsided, a cloud of sea birds startled by the noise came funneling about them and settled close by.

When dawn came, the elephant herd with bellowings and rucklings of pleasure, launched themselves into the sea to forage along the shore for the innocent fare on which they lived. These waters were a fruitful breeding place for the big clams, mussels and whelks and innumerable crustaceans large and small. Submerging, the hungry monsters swam along the bottom, nosing into the mud and ooze in their foraging, rising from time to time to masticate a great mouthful, gulping them down whole, shell and all, together with quantities of mud, pebbles and stones, some of them as large as hens' eggs, which they cracked between their irresistible jaws. Stones did not trouble their incomparably hardy stomachs in the least; they swallowed them like roughage, as humans would eat nuts.

As full daylight came, the rocky headlands above the beach were seen to be rookeries for thousands and thousands of sea birds. All along the cliffsides in crannies in the rocks nested ivory and black-back gulls, auks, skuas, kittiwakes and cormorants. On the beach below puffins and penguins and eider ducks had their nests upon the ground. All day they wheeled and screamed and eddied in the air, for this was their breeding time. Their high, wind-like cries blended with the sound of the sea amid the rocks.

At midday some of the bolder spirits among them descended to the shingle and roosted upon the backs of the sea elephants as the latter dozed and basked. While they roosted they foraged upon the barnacle-like growths that clung to the seamed and wrinkled hides of the giants. This familiar socialism was apparently of long standing for the sea elephants accepted the peculiar currying with evident signs of pleasure.

That afternoon as the herd lay sleeping, the mate of old Matwa the leader, drew out of the long line and went floundering up the beach to a sheltered spot at the base of the cliffs. Matwa watched her go, but made no move to follow. All afternoon she lav there while the herd continued their routine, and when nightfall came there was a newborn little one lying on the sand beside her. Matwa lumbered over to inspect the newcomer and voiced his pride and approval in a bellow that shivered the cliff on its basalt base. When the herd went down to feed next morning the youngster waddled along with his mother. Born almost in the water as he was, he could swim and float from the first moment almost as well as his parents.

Within the next six days five other cows gave birth to little ones. Secure in a warm coating of fat and hide, the youngsters lay all day on the bare surf-washed rocks at the tideline with the spindrift hissing over them. The icy water dripped from them after each receding wave, but they seemed to bask in it as cats before a fire. Each little one had patches of hair on his grayish hide in memory of that far-off time when they were land-dwelling quadrupeds.

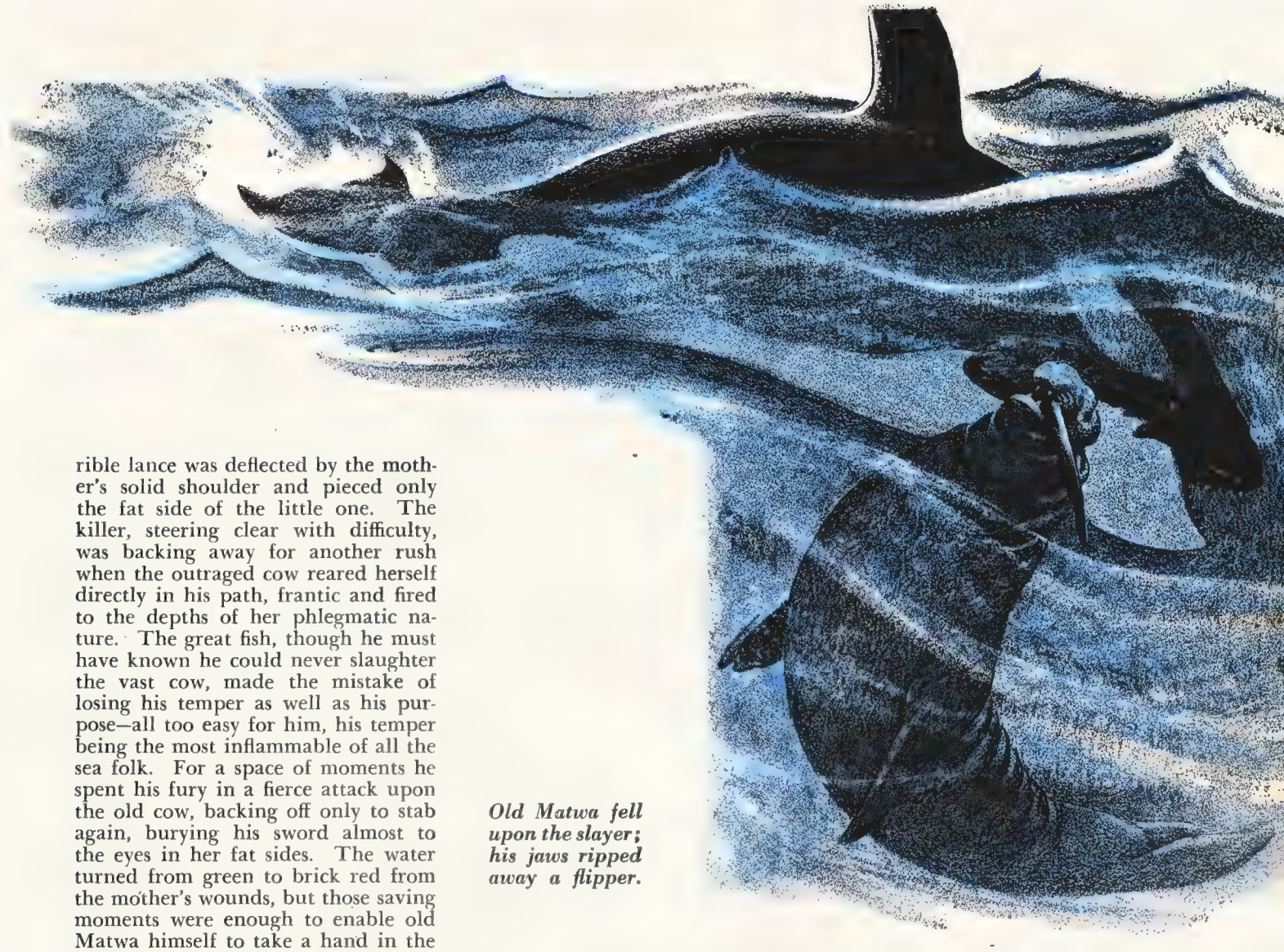
Now began a period of danger for the herd, for while the mature animals had no deadly enemies but man—represented by the crews of occasional whaling ships—there were many on land and in the sea on the watch for the young of their kind. Though these solitudes of the Far South seemed so empty and desolate they were secretly populous and teeming with a furtive life.

That afternoon old Matwa's mate was teaching her little one the niceties of diving and floating. The old cow rocked to and fro in the ground swells, her body bolt upright in the water like a bobbing buoy that she might question the air as well as the water for possible danger. From time to time she gave a few automatic strokes of her flippers to keep from drifting in to the surf-line. Beside her floated the little one. He was only about four feet long, his small sunken eyes dull and unfocused in his blunt undelineated head. Below them as they swam the sunlight gleamed palely on the green and silver sides of plaice, pollack and flounders, foraging close to the bottom on the inconsequential whatnot stirred up by the making tide.

Suddenly all these were seen to dart away with a speed that left trails of silver in their wake, as a lean, swift, gleaming form came gliding in from the shadowy deep. The stranger was some eighteen feet long, slender and sinister as a steel blade—a fish, but such a fish as inhabits the realm of nightmare. A keen lance two feet in length stood straight out from his snout like a spear, and he came shooting soundlessly and with appalling swiftness along the bottom, his movements almost invisible because of his pale greenish coloring. He was one of those giant mackerel called swordfish, who are perhaps the fiercest and swiftest corsairs of the sea.

Of the schools of fleeing fish the stranger took no notice; his cruel, blazing eyes, hard as glass, had focused upon the sea-elephant calf. But before she had rightly seen him the cow elephant had surged forward and flung a protecting flipper about the youngster, warned of what manner of enemy it was by the fleeing fish beneath her.

Turning half over with a screwlike twist of its mighty tail, the swordfish shot forward and upward with a lunge that would have driven its sword clean through the youngster's body had it struck true. But in the same instant the cow elephant glimpsed him and gave a desperate lunge shoreward, driving the calf before her, and sending forth simultaneously a coughing bellow for aid. The blow of the ter-



*Old Matwa fell upon the slayer; his jaws ripped away a flipper.*

rible lance was deflected by the mother's solid shoulder and pieced only the fat side of the little one. The killer, steering clear with difficulty, was backing away for another rush when the outraged cow reared herself directly in his path, frantic and fired to the depths of her phlegmatic nature. The great fish, though he must have known he could never slaughter the vast cow, made the mistake of losing his temper as well as his purpose—all too easy for him, his temper being the most inflammable of all the sea folk. For a space of moments he spent his fury in a fierce attack upon the old cow, backing off only to stab again, burying his sword almost to the eyes in her fat sides. The water turned from green to brick red from the mother's wounds, but those saving moments were enough to enable old Matwa himself to take a hand in the affair. The swordfish in his fury was oblivious of the approach of the big bull until the latter loomed abruptly beside him.

Like a cavern the great jaws of old Matwa gaped open then clamped shut irresistibly upon the base of the killer's tail. Not often did the ponderous old bull succeed in closing with any adversary, but when he did, the outcome was swift indeed. His stone-crushing jaws ground quickly through bone and cartilage to the spine. Shorn of his strength and speed, and minus a rudder to guide him, the swordfish was through. For a space he snapped and lashed and struggled, and finally, with a tremendous effort, tore himself loose and went plowing away seaward, leaving a long trail of blood to mark his painful and uncertain progress. For a hundred yards or so old Matwa followed wrathfully; then raising himself high in the water and glaring about him, he sent forth a roaring challenge to any other possible enemies and swam back to his mate who was snuggling her excited calf in the shallows.

Two days later as the sea elephants were feeding offshore they were roused by a distant pulse beating through the sea. Their eardrums, quickened to the delicacy of microphones by water-dwelling, picked up the sounds by a sort of submarine telegraphy. The herd swung shoreward awaiting the clearer message. Presently it came amid alarming submarine currents that swayed the weed beds of the shallows and sent scores of bottom dwellers scuttling to cover.

"Yap! Yap! Yap!" From a distance sharp joyful sounds came echoing over the water—the barking of fur seals! Matwa and the other bulls lifted their blunt heads to see as a line of shifting black spots came sweeping shoreward, others beneath the surface, boring the twilit depths as if driven by twin screws. At the surf line, eight, ten, fifteen glossy black forms broke water and went wallowing joyously shoreward. They were an advance guard of seals coming northward like the sea elephants, ahead of the winter. All day they continued to arrive until the rocks along the tide line were dark with them.

At first they usurped Matwa's chosen beach, but when the line of elephant bulls advanced up the shingle with snortings and bellowings, their smaller cousins decamped in a hurry to a less favorable beach a hundred yards down shore.

Now, though the seals were their relatives and wholly harmless, Matwa and his herd were uneasy at the advent of the newcomers. Unrest was manifest throughout the ranks that afternoon; mothers kept an extra-zealous watch over their little ones; and old Matwa constantly patrolled his herd while feeding, questioning currents of air and water for possible danger, with his ears, his nostrils and his long grayish whiskers in which was concentrated a power of supersensitiveness beyond human conception. A patriarch of more than fifty years was Matwa, remarkable in craft as he was in physique, and he knew that where fur seal congregate in numbers, the

news is relayed mysteriously by air and water telegraph, and the grimmest killers of land and sea are drawn for slaughter.

Yet more than two weeks passed, in which nothing happened to substantiate the old bull's premonitions. Once two Steller's sea lions, huge, fierce-eyed, -eared and -whiskered, appeared suddenly offshore and made sport amid the seal herd for a space, harrying every animal in sight, leaving red gashes on many a sleek hide—but these represented no real danger. They were only living up to the perennial evil temper that is part of the sea lion's nature, and they passed on within an hour, having merely paused here on a long three-thousand-mile carry up the South Pacific. Again a lone leopard seal, that fierce spotted slayer who is the abiding nemesis of all the other members of his clan, came shooting in from the deep one afternoon and made a swift kill of a cow seal—literally tore her to pieces on the run, and lobtailed for chunks of living meat as she sank to the sea floor spouting blood. But he too passed on his way with the coming of darkness.

Then one morning as Matwa and his herd were riding upright outside the surf-line like bobbing wine corks, with night mists peeling off the water like breath from a window, an old dog seal sporting on the rocks, emitted a sudden yelping cry. Another was seen to stand suddenly on his head and crack the water with his tail like a rifle shot. Instantly the whole seal band wheeled and went tearing shoreward past the sea elephants amid a welter of foam. The very fish were fleeing into the shallows. Everything there and thereabouts seemed apprised of danger from afar.

Old Matwa likewise sounded a warning to his herd, for he had glimpsed a crescent of six-foot dorsal fins cutting the water behind the seals, high, black triangular fins shaped like the blades of huge guillotines. The killer whales, those marine wolves which range the seas from pole to pole, were on the hunt!

The killers seemed crazed with blood and they swept forward with the speed of the wind hurling themselves upon seal and sea elephant alike.

The throats of several seals were slashed open before they had covered two hundred feet, for the attackers killed wantonly, far more than they needed for their hunger, like wolves on land in the midst of a flock of sheep. One young seal was left yapping in terror upon a rock. A seventeen-foot killer leaped clear out of the water and crashed upon him bodily with the weight of a ton, dragging him beneath the surface.

Matwa and five other bulls swiftly formed a rear-guard phalanx in an attempt to hold the enemy off while the herd sped shoreward. But the killers were the fastest things in all the ocean. They broke through the clumsy guard and two more of the calves and a young cow were ripped to pieces. Old Matwa with a subterranean bellow fell upon the slayer of the cow, his crushing jaws tearing through bone, blubber and cartilage as he ripped away a side flipper. Two more sea wolves rushed in, tearing like bulldogs at the body of the cow, at Matwa, and their disabled comrade alike.

Another cow was pulled under. At the tideline Matwa marshaled the elephant bulls beside him and they turned, roaring their wrath and challenge to the skies, their small grim phlegmatic eyes blazing with a trollish rage. But vast as they were the enemy made sport with them when they lunged into the surf, ringing them round, ripping and tearing. For the killers are the lords of the sea when all is said and done, conquerors of even the mighty sperm whale, and those who tried conclusions with them had already given hostages to death.

For twenty-four hours they remained off shore, patrolling the waters in hope of further slaughter, during which time the seal herd fed not at all. At last the enemy departed, drawn by some water rumor of easier quarry offshore, but long after that the waters were filled with skulking dog-fish and deep-water eels, the ghouls and jackals of the sea, who follow in the killers' wake and feed upon the leavings.

When they had gone the herd, with the fatalism of all sea folk, seemed to forget all peril instantly, but old Matwa relaxed his vigilance not at all. True, the most terrible of all the enemies of the sea had come, taken their toll and passed on. Peace seemed to have settled once more over his basking beach, yet the loneliness and sense of sequestration were no longer the same. The ring-pass-not of the island had been broken and a vague sense of dread and apprehension continued to live in Matwa's blood. At times an instinct keener than any brain counseled him to lead his herd away from this shore and at once. Yet he tarried, for the equivocal gods of the sea had still another trial in store.

Naturally it was from the sea, as always, that the herd continually watched for danger, but one afternoon as they lay basking, an excited barking reached them from the seal herd. A band of men had suddenly rounded a distant point of rock, running and shouting. They had anchored their boat on the other side of the island and approached stealthily over the rocks. Half the seal herd, cut off from the water, went floundering toward higher ground. The men rushed them, swinging blows right and left with heavy clubs.

Matwa heaved round with a bellowing injunction to the herd to follow him, but another band of sealers had crept up on the herd from the opposite direction and sprang forward to cut him off from the shore. The crack of rifles was added to the din. The plan of the poachers was to drive both herds onto the high ground at the center of the island, exhausting them on the way, then round them up and kill them with clubs. The sea elephants, in terror, were already falling in with the ruse.

But Matwa knew men. He had lived through one such sealers' drive, and he knew that the rapacity of man began where that of animals left off. Along his back were grayish creases, and deep in his massive shoulder bone was a leaden bullet, memento of other encounters with humans. He reared high on his flippers and roared at the herd to follow him in a rush for the kind, familiar shelter of the water, the only hope of safety—but terror had gripped the ranks. A moment they hung at pause, vast heads swaying in indecision. But a cordon of uncouth men had closed in between them and the tide-line, yelling and swinging clubs. Panic swept them and they went plunging and floundering toward higher ground in a retreat that spelled their doom.

Matwa knew exactly the bloody end in store. The sea was the single hope. He roared again, but the herd was deaf to him. Even alone he might gain the water if he rushed straight through the line of sealers. Bullets began to whine about him. Ahead of him a two-months-old calf left straggling behind the herd bleated in terror. Wheeling, Matwa went plunging over the rocks, grabbed the calf by the scruff of the neck and drove it forward. He was the leader here. His place was with the herd.

Off to the left the poachers were already slaughtering among the seal herd, striking fiercely right and left. At every blow a seal collapsed, an inert quivering mass among the rocks. A bullet cut a furrow along Matwa's padded back; another shot clipped through his left flipper. Sand spurted up into his eyes, half blinding him. The men were rushing the herd to tire them out quickly so that the slaughter might begin. Already the cows and calves were lagging in weakness. Soon the other band of poachers would finish with the seals and join the main body.

*Matwa came floundering back, roaring; but the men avoided his clumsy rushes without effort.*

Presently two men with heavy clubs rushed in from the side. One of the cows had waddled into a depression among the rocks and been left behind. The men smote her in unison with all their strength upon the back of the neck where the trunk joined the head and she collapsed just as the seals had done, in a huge squirming mass. Old Matwa, seeing, was filled with the most terrible rage he had ever known. He came floundering back, roaring sod-shaking roars, his crest flaring, but the men avoided his clumsy rushes without effort. They would wait until he was exhausted before tackling this monster. But Matwa was tiring fast. Soon, within a half hour at most, the killing would begin. The annihilation of the herd was inevitable. . . .

Less than a mile away the Australian Coast Guard cutter, *Balkis,* whose chief duty it was to protect the pelagic life of those waters, was rounding the western point of the little island when her coxswain, leaning over the rail noticed a commotion in the water off the port bow. He took a long look shoreward, then sped up to the bridge, calling out to the captain.

"Look yonder, sir," he said pointing. "Can you make out something in toward shore? A lot of moving specks. Look like seal—"

"Quite possible," said the captain. He brought out his glasses and scanned the waters closely, then the shore.

"You're right, Coxswain," he said excitedly. "It is seal—dozens of them. They're evidently back in that old rookery on the island. First time in years. But there seems to be something wrong with them. We'd better nose in a bit closer and have a look."

A MINUTE later, still studying the shore, he shouted:

"Have a small boat lowered, Mr. Gibson. Those seal are frantic and I see dead ones up the beach. Full speed ahead!"

Presently around a jutting point of rock a dark low hull appeared, partly hidden in a rocky indentation in the shore—the poachers' ship. A white jet of steam shot upward as the sealer's whistle gave warning to the men on shore. The killers of the seal could be seen running madly toward the beach.

The cutter's captain raised his hand and let it fall. From the ship's big bow-gun came a deafening report and a shot went screaming over the island, sent purposely high. At the second shot the poachers halted in a cluster, arms raised in token of surrender. It was useless to try to run for it. The sea-elephant herd was saved!

Of course, old Matwa, with the one-pointedness of all wild things, believed that his own prowess and that of the other bulls had driven off the enemy. As the poachers were marched down to the cutter's small-boat there rose like a taunt and a challenge from the rocks above the beach, a salvo of roars and bellowings of fury—confirming Matwa's belief in himself and his kingship of the island. On the strength of that he remained there with his herd the rest of that season and led them back again the following year—which was a good thing at that, for the Government, awakening tardily to the fact that Matwa's tribe was well nigh extinct, had set aside that island together with many others, as basking and breeding places for the great sea beasts, and placed a heavy penalty on every animal killed.

# FLAMING JET

A MYSTERIOUS ACCIDENT IN A FACTORY MAKING JET-PLANE ENGINES . . . . COULD IT HAVE BEEN MURDER?

*by* GRANGE LEWIS

MY friend Greg's red hair was mussed and his square-jawed face was tense. He kept wiping his hands along the sides of his trousers. Yet when he spoke, his voice, above the throb of the auxiliary generators outside, was calm and thoughtful, the way it always was. "If you men will kindly cross your fingers," he said, "I'll proceed to fire up this jet engine."

He flicked a couple of switches on the control panel with his stubby forefingers, turned on the fuel pumps, then opened the master valves.

Down on the floor below our control balcony, the jet engine, anchored to its thick slab of concrete, coughed out a thick puff of buff-colored smoke, which was followed by a yellowish snake of flame. A steady, powerful hissing noise developed. On the control panel, needles in instruments and gauges began to advance as Greg slowly increased the fuel intake.

Out of the small group of engineers standing behind Greg, a long sigh went up, a sigh of heartfelt relief. As for me, I was taking it hard. The way the building vibrated as the jet strained in its mount, set up an answering jangle in my own nervous system. I'd designed that engine mount, and I was thinking that it had better hold.

"The thing, at least, turns over!" Mathew Allen grunted. Allen, Mercury Avco's head design engineer, hulking and unkempt, but as sharp an engineer as there was in the industry, had a terrific project on his hands if Greg's jet engine panned out.

John Summerville, Mercury's stoop-shouldered, powerfully muscled president, kept his eyes locked on the instruments. "So it turns over! Good! I expected that. But my fingers will stay crossed until we see how the fuel consumption is working out. Give me a long-range jet, that's all I ask. It's the only thing that will make me happy."

"The flow-meter shows the consumption is one and a sixteenth gallons per minute at four thousand foot-pounds of thrust," Greg reported.

"You don't mean it!" Mr. Summerville exclaimed delightedly. "You promised me this would happen. But by Jove, on the first test!"

Otto Grigsby, head of jet research, tottered over to the water fountain, took a long drink, rose to his full height, all five feet five of him, and patted his pale lips. "Why overdo a good thing? The test's very encouraging so far, very encouraging. But let's cool off the engine, check it to see how it's standing up, and then proceed with more tests tomorrow."

"I'd like to see this baby get one shot of full power," Allen said. "That would give us a complete line on what to expect."

Mr. Summerville ran a forefinger along his nose, then inclined his head toward Greg. With a happy grin, Greg turned the fuel two full revolutions to the right.

I became aware that the hiss of the jet's exhaust had now become a whine. It was not a shrill or high-pitched whine, but it was still well above the middle register. It penetrated our eardrums, and together with the increased vibration of the building, it impressed us with the fact that tremendous power was being generated on the floor below.

There was a sharp cracking sound. A piece of metal slapped into the wall behind us, ricocheted to the other side of the building, and broke glass as it shot through a window.

Horrified, we stared down. The jet engine, no longer solid in its test stand, was beginning to weave back and forth. Another bolt snapped. The tail section rose. The whole engine, shooting out its fiery exhaust, began to turn in an arc, like a gigantic pinwheel.

Just as I saw Greg's hand racing for the fuel valve, the stampede hit me. The engineers jammed me against the wall, shoved me through a heavy steel door, and swept me on downstairs and out of the building.

Once outside, we waited for an explosion, or at least the jar of the jet crashing against a wall. But aside from the noise from the generators, there was no sound.

"Brave, aren't we?" somebody said. "Stowell seems to have taken care of the situation without our help."

I RAN back into the building, and up the stairs, the other men with me. The jet engine was indeed shut off. Greg was alone up there, on the floor, lying slumped over on his side, his shirt burned off. A tiny flame was running along the cloth on his shoulder. Savagely, I beat it out, then reached down to place my hand over his heart.

There was no heart action. When I withdrew my hand, skin from Greg's chest came away in my fingers. I groaned and stepped backward. The walls seemed suddenly to be slanting in a crazy direction, and a loud buzzing started up in my ears.

In answer to a question about an ambulance, I heard Mr. Summerville say, "Of course, of course. But it's no use. That jet blast seared his lungs."

Yes, Greg was dead. I backed off, and started to walk, without knowing where I was going. I was stunned, but not enough to overcome my growing feeling of nausea.

Unaware of what route I'd taken to get there, I found myself staring at Greg's jet engine. It was faced in the opposite direction from its starting point. The nose was still held by its twisted shackle, but the tail cone was settled on the concrete floor, with a big dent in it.

I pushed open a door and walked out into the bright sunlight. Without purpose, I headed toward the landing strip, perhaps because I wouldn't meet any people I knew out there. One of those lofty maintenance step-ladders got in my way, so I climbed to the top of it, and slowly sat down.

"I killed him!" I said to myself. "I killed him!"

My eyes stung, as though there were grains of sand under the lids, yet I wasn't conscious of any tears in them. I had known Greg ever since my fourth grade in grammar school. We'd gone through high school and Cal Tech together. You'll find good engineers everywhere, but for great ones, ones with imagination and creative genius, you have to search a long time. Greg had been one of the great ones.

And I couldn't even work a simple stress problem on a test fixture! I sat up there on that ladder and cursed; and it was myself I was cursing.

An hour or so later, over the factory loud-speaker, I heard my name called: *"Robert Ferriss, report to Room 17 at once. Report to Room 17 at once."*

Room 17 was the office of Mercury's president. I climbed down from my ladder and walked over to mahogany row. Without a word to me, Mr. Summerville's private secretary waved me into the inner office.

Mathew Allen, head of design engineering was in there, as was Otto Grigsby, head of jet research, and Newton Cross, head of the power-plant section. None of them was willing to look me in the eye.

Mr. Summerville sat hunched over in his big swivel chair toying with the wooden name-plate which had been on my desk, saying that I was foreman of the experimental department.

Suddenly, Mr. Summerville broke the name-plate across his knee, and threw the pieces into a waste-basket. "Ferriss," he said, "I'll give you five minutes to get outside the gate!"

I stared at him. If my face turned brick red, it only matched the color of his own cheeks.

"The steel straps you used had all the tensile strength of putty!" He slammed down parts of some bolts. "And these bolts—why didn't you use taffy, instead? We just tested them. They pulled apart at three thousand pounds. In the name of God, man, what sort of material did you use? It wasn't steel!"

I gaped at him. All the ideas that had been building in my head for the past hour, ideas which were based on the premise that I was guilty of a terrible mistake in stress analysis, now became altered by this new information. Yet I still couldn't believe what my mind was trying to tell me. "Only three thousand pounds? Ridiculous!"

"Ridiculous, my friend? Of course it's ridiculous. But it's also the truth."

I took a deep breath. "My parts were made from heat-treated, 4130 steel, with a Rockwell reading of a hundred and seventy thousand. They were magnafluxed, and in the destruction test, they held up in a fifty-thousand-pound pull."

"So why weren't they used?"

"They were. I put them in, and torqued them myself. Who pulled them out?"

I didn't get an immediate answer. Otto Grigsby's eyes were protruding from their sockets. His face looked drawn and haggard. "What you are saying is that the test on the jet engine was deliberately sabotaged!"

"That's exactly what I'm saying."

Mathew Allen shifted his two hundred and fifty untidy pounds around in his chair and glowered. "Sabotage, I take it, is a crime. And when a death occurs during the commission of a crime, that death is not considered an accident under the law, but murder. Isn't that true?"

Summerville nodded. "Murder is the exact word for it." He gazed at me a trifle uncertainly, although the wrath was still present in his eyes. "Ferriss, you've made a point. But if the jet was sabotaged, it was done in your department. At the least, I'm calling you negligent and incompetent. So you're still fired, although I've now come to the idea that you'd

*When I withdrew my hand, skin from Greg's chest came away in my fingers. The walls seemed suddenly to be slanting in a crazy direction.*

*"I now own Greg's patents. Still want to fire me?"*

better stick around for an investigation."

The anger that had been creeping up through my veins now raced through my whole body. My hands shook as I moved closer to the big mahogany desk, and my throat was raw.

"I don't think you're going to fire me!" I said. "Not today, not tomorrow, and not next week!"

Mr. Summerville slowly got to his feet. He stuck his heavy face close to mine, and pointed to the door. "That way," he said. "Out!"

I stood where I was. "You've lost all your European transport plane contracts to the English, because their jet Comet has caught you flat-footed trying to peddle your conventional type planes. You're due to lose your domestic contracts unless you come up with something new in the way of jet power. Greg Stowell's engine was your lifesaver. Yet you don't own it. He wasn't an employee of yours. All you have are certain rights if the engine works out."

John Summerville gave me a hard, wary look. "Tell me something new!"

"All right. Greg has no living relatives. There's only one name in his will, and it's mine. Greg is dead, and I now own the patents to his engine. Still want to fire me?"

The big man dropped back heavily in his seat, and said nothing.

I went on: "Your part of the contract was to build certain parts, and to assemble the engine. You've been paid for that. Then you were to run the tests. The first test got sabotaged. You say I'm responsible. But you forget that as your employee, I'm also your agent. So if your charge stands up, I can, as owner of the engine, take it away from you because as your agent, I sabotaged it under your jurisdiction. How do you like that?"

He didn't like it. He looked at me as though I were something that had crawled up out of some vile-smelling swamp ooze. "You couldn't do it."

"Fire and see!"

Mathew Allen said: "I've heard of some prime stinkers in my life, but you've got them all beat."

At that point, I didn't care what they thought of me. How could they know what was in the back of my mind? My only interest was in getting one matter straightened out.

"Well?" I asked.

Mr. Summerville's face was sagging. "You know how to back a man into a corner," he said. "I'm over the barrel."

I waited for a moment or two, then swung about, walked to the door, and left. I proceeded to the engineering building, went to my desk, found the two surplus bolts left over from my test fixture parts, and took them over to have them tested. They stood up. Then I dug up all the shop orders which had been used in making the parts, and returned to Mr. Summerville's office.

By this time, my anger was being replaced by a cold and relentless bitterness. But my head had cleared, and I now had my emotions under control.

Mr. Summerville looked up when I entered, and gazed at me somberly. "What now?" he asked.

"I thought I'd come in and offer my apologies for my explosion a little while ago, and also to explain my position with regard to Greg's unfortunate death."

"Go ahead."

"You'll appreciate how I felt, and how I feel right now when I tell you that Greg was not only my best friend, but that ever since we were kids together, we've been closer than brothers. I'll never admire anyone so much."

I hesitated, but the other man made no comment.

"I've never taken much interest in money, probably because I've always had enough. Anyway, I had an inheritance. For the past few years, I've financed several of Greg's projects. They've always worked out, so I'm ahead on that score. I backed him in this jet-engine development. My main interest in keeping my job is to help run down the man who killed my friend. If you still think I'm incompetent, fire me after the investigation is over, and the jet-engine deal goes on anyway."

Summerville took out a long cigar, lighted it, and said: "I think I like you better than I did an hour ago. So you have a personal as well as a business reason for finding out who sabotaged the jet engine. Am I to take it that you were Greg's partner?"

When I nodded, he said: "All right, we'll forget what we said to each other in our last meeting. What is it you want?"

I placed the shop orders and the test reports on the desk before him, and said: "If you'll examine these papers, you'll see that the parts going into our test mount had plenty of

safety factor, and were adequately tested."

"Yes, so the paper-work says. But it doesn't tell me why the mount was finally put together with phony material."

"Well, if we find out why, then we've got the answer on who sabotaged us."

He wagged his big head. "The first thing that comes to my mind is foreign agents. But this jet engine was designed for commercial planes, and as yet, the military haven't shown too much interest, so I don't see where spies come into it."

"Leaving out spies, and eliminating screwballs with axes to grind, the only thing left that makes sense, so far as I can see, is dirty work from a commercial competitor."

"Ah!" Mr. Summerville laid his hands out flat on the table-top, and peered at me quizzically. "The police will go into the whole affair, and turn it upside down. You think, perhaps, that you'll be able to outguess them?"

"I have an idea, but you'll have to coöperate with me. Now, only a small group of engineers and the actual crew that made installations for the test had access to our restricted area in the research building. That means one of them is our man, doesn't it?"

"I can't find any fault with that logic at the moment."

"All right, if that's true, and the man has been acting for a competitor, it shows they're afraid of our engine. It's either better than theirs, or is further along in development. By this time, the word has got out around here that you and I are on the outs. Let it stand that I've been fired. That puts me in circulation, owning patents for a valuable engine, and ready to say yes to any good offer."

Mr. Summerville tilted back in his chair, blowing out a large cloud of cigar smoke. "So the pitch, as you see it, is that this competitor, who has a man planted among us, will get the news early, and will then step forward to make contact with you!"

"That's it."

"The theory makes sense. I'm going to okay it, pending approval by the Los Angeles police. Still, supposing that the man does make contact with you, how are you going to be sure he's the one you're looking for?"

My head was beginning to ache. I was feeling the strain of the day's disaster. "I don't know now. Maybe I will then. I'll probably have to play it by ear. At the moment, I want to get out of here to do some thinking."

Mr. Summerville got up, extended his hand, then accompanied me to the door.

"Wait a minute!" he said. "You're supposed to storm out of here the way you did once already today. Remember to stay available for police questioning."

He returned to his desk. I got a stony look on my face, opened the door, and slammed out with long, angry strides. The girl in the outer office stared at me curiously as I sailed by. I didn't see who else was around, for I was looking neither to right nor left. . . .

That afternoon, I met Lt. Herndon of the Los Angeles central homicide squad, a red-faced man who wore

*Illustrated by* GRATTAN CONDON

*"Drop into my office tomorrow. I might have a proposition for you."*

thick, horn-rimmed glasses, and talked with a soft Boston accent. He questioned me, and he listened to my ideas about becoming a decoy for the sabotaging competitor. Cold water wasn't thrown on my scheme, but to Lt. Herndon, it was only one of many possible angles of attack he was considering.

"How close did you live to Mr. Stowell?" he asked.

"We had adjoining apartments. We were back and forth all the time."

"All right, my men are examining the personal papers in his place right now. I'm going to make these papers available to you. You were familiar with his affairs, and it's possible you might see something significant that would escape us. At any rate, try to sift out any possible offers he might have received for his jet engine, offers that he turned down. If you run into anything, call me up."

That night, I spent several hours going through Greg's correspondence. He'd been an orderly soul. Letters were filed according to date of receipt. But if he'd received offers for his jet engine, they weren't in writing.

I turned to his diary, which actually was more like a notebook than a diary, for in it he kept formulas he'd been working on, ideas, and occasional bits of information. At last, on page 63, which covered a date seven months before, I ran across this:

*"Phil Benthram made me another handsome offer for the engine, but I don't like the man, so I turned him down again."*

I laid the notebook down and closed my eyes. Phil Benthram, the chorus girls' delight! Thoughtfully, I considered what I knew about the man. I doubt if there was one newspaper reader in the country unfamiliar with his fabulous career.

At twenty-one, he'd inherited ten million. He'd gone to Texas and sunk all his money in oil wells. Every well turned out to be a gusher. Returning to his Broadway haunts, he'd married three different and talented blondes by the time he was twenty-five. He was thirty-five now, and for the past ten years has been too cagey to be trapped into matrimony again.

A born plunger, Benthram had taken several flyers on Wall Street, and had cleaned up. The Sunday supplements kept calling attention to his Midas touch. By this time, his nickname had been shortened to the Touch.

With no patience for dull business detail, Benthram was nevertheless a hard, ruthless promoter. Men who entered into deals with him thinking, because of his playboy reputation, that he was a woolly lamb to be shorn, lived to find themselves without any shirt-tails. Common gossip had it that he'd run his fortune up to over a hundred million. And a year ago, he'd bought a small Los Angeles aircraft-engine company, and was now trying to turn it into something big.

For a while I turned Phil Benthram over in my mind as a possibility. The more I did so, the better he became. I glanced at my watch. It was ten o'clock. I got up, went to the phone, and called Lt. Herndon.

After I'd told him about Greg's note on Phil Benthram, I said: "I can either wait for him to come to me, or I can go to him. I understand he is a night-club fan. Do you suppose you could locate him tonight?"

"In a hurry, aren't you? All right, if you follow my instructions, tonight might be a good time for you to try to flush some information out of him. Of course your situation will be a wet one. You've been drowning your sorrow. Why not change your clothes, and in the meantime, I'll get Benthram spotted."

I took a shower, put on a dark suit, and heard the phone ring. It was Lt. Herndon. "He's at the Club Vienna in Hollywood. Meet me there about a quarter after eleven. Not before."

The Club Vienna was one of those intimate night-clubs that cater only to the better element. You could tell by their prices. Lt. Herndon met me outside, and introduced the attractive girl with him as Policewoman Nielson.

"He's in the corner booth off to the right," Herndon said. "I've secured the table just beyond him." He gave me detailed instructions on what I was to say, and how I was to act, and then said, "I'm going in now. Give me time to be settled before you make your entrance."

I walked slowly around the block, then entered the Club Vienna. From the bar, I could see Phil Benthram. He looked just like his photographs—lean, handsome, and self-possessed. As I carefully weaved toward his table, I could see that his companion was a gorgeous blonde who favored deep lavender lipstick, bare shoulders, and a vacant stare. Before her was a glass of champagne. Benthram seemed to be satisfied with a cup of coffee and a turkey sandwich.

Passing his table, I permitted myself to see him for the first time. I stared at him owlishly for a moment, then extended the index finger, and said: "You're Phil—Phillip Benthram. My name's Bob Ferriss, and I want a job with you."

He looked at me as though I were a fly on the wall; he regarded me without joy, without sorrow, without any expression whatsoever. How he kept in condition in night-clubs I don't know, but his flesh was firm, and he wore a nice tan. For a while I thought I'd drawn a blank, that my hunch about him was all wrong.

Then suddenly he seemed to make up his mind. Moving over to make room for me, he said, "Sit down." To the blonde, he added, "Go powder your nose."

The blonde clicked her pretty teeth in annoyance at being dismissed so abruptly, but knowing where her diamond bracelets were coming from, she obediently tottered off.

Benthram waited for me to speak, and I was afraid he'd notice my excitement. I could feel perspiration pop out on my forehead. Desperately wanting to find out if this man had ordered the sabotage of Greg's engine, I was fearful lest I'd fall down in my rôle. I'd been no good, even in amateur theatricals.

"My pal was killed today," I blurted.

"That's tough."

I gave him plenty of opportunity to make further conversation, but when he didn't, I realized that if I were to get my information tonight, I'd have to pull it out by forceps.

"When do I go to work for you?" I asked.

He regarded me thoughtfully, and said: "Drop into my office tomorrow. I might have a proposition for you."

He was being wary. I wondered how much needle he would need. "I've got several propositions already today," I said. "Very surprising."

Benthram looked annoyed. Presently he dragged out his checkbook, wrote out a check to my name, and handed it to me. It was for a hundred thousand dollars. I folded the check and dutifully tucked it away in my wallet.

"Want a written agreement?" I said.

Benthram studied the menu in front of him, saw a blank space on the back of it, took out a pen, and wrote out an agreement for me. When I looked it over, I was amazed by its fairness. The value he put on Greg's jet engine was probably precisely what it was worth, and besides, there was a royalty clause.

I shook my head. "Suppose I don't like this agreement tomorrow morning. How do I wiggle out of it?"

So he added an escape clause, giving me three days to return his check and void the agreement. This got me. I signed up.

"One thing," I said. "Your man over at Mercury Avco did a very sloppy job on the engine. Besides, he killed my buddy. He goes, or I don't play."

Phil Benthram's jaw snapped into a grim line. "I think you're a damned snoop," he breathed. "I don't have a man at Mercury."

I couldn't think of anything to say, so I didn't say it. I was getting pretty jittery. Had I overplayed my hand?

"Maybe you'd better give me back that check."

I said: "You call me a snoop, but you can't prove it. I say you have a man at Mercury, but I can't prove that, either. So we're quits. Do you want that engine?"

If I hadn't known what to say a moment before, Benthram now found himself in the same situation. I was beginning to get the idea of how powerful a leverage Greg's engine was. He decided to take the chance. "See me at my office tomorrow," he said.

I told him I would, and left. By the time I got out of the Club Vienna, and into my car, I was starting to suffer from the shakes.

After about five minutes, Lt. Herndon came around to my car and said: "Nice work. You could have been smoother, but after all, you got the information we wanted. Benthram obviously knew the situation at Mercury. He has a man there, all right, to do his dirty work, and to keep him informed. Well, get some sleep now, and we'll nail this case shut tomorrow."

I went home and to bed. For a while I tossed around, my mind working back and forth on Greg's death, and who Benthram's inside man was at Mercury. But I was tired, and at last my eyes stayed shut.

*"The dirty turncoat!" Grigsby's voice was shrill. All at once I was looking into a belly-gun.*

NEXT morning, I found that Lt. Herndon was not through with me. He had taken over a couple of offices in Plant Protection.

"You started this line of inquiry," he said. "I'm giving you the chance to complete it. It'll be plain, frontal attack, nothing subtle to the thing. You'll have some questions to ask, and you'll do it in the waiting-room out yonder. The room's been wired, and I'll be listening in."

"How many on your list?"

"Three. One of them is Benthram's man. Which one, we don't know yet. They're suspects, not because we have tied them directly to sabotage, or to Benthram, but because after careful screening, we found that they were the only men in this plant who had the opportunity to tamper with that test equipment. All three are high up in your engineering department. Now here is what you're to say."

After a bit, he let me out a side door, and in fifteen minutes, I returned to the waiting-room. Mathew Allen, head of design engineering, big and mussed, was studying the cracks on the floor.

I said, "I saw Phil Benthram last night."

He didn't look up. "Is that supposed to mean anything to me?"

"It all depends. I told Benthram that if he were hiring me, he'd have to take you off his payroll."

That brought his head up. He looked at me, puzzled. Then he frowned. "By some stretch of the imagination, in some silly, roundabout way, are you trying to say I had a finger in sabotaging Greg Stowell's jet engine?"—

"That seems to be the idea."

He took one step forward, and hit me on the jaw. By the time I had got to my feet again, he was gone. Was his reaction to my little speech caused by honest indignation, or guilt? I didn't know. So far as I was concerned, it could have been either.

I took another fifteen-minute walk, and when I returned, Otto Grigsby was in the office. Wearily, I said: "I saw Phil Benthram last night."

The slight little man walked over to the water-cooler, popped a pill into his mouth, and said: "So?"

"So he hired me. But I insisted on his throwing you to the dogs. He agreed, inasmuch as he was pretty upset over your killing Greg Stowell. That wasn't in the contract."

Grigsby leaned on the table standing between us, and snapped: "Do you expect me to believe that ridiculous statement?"

"Of course. Because I have proof." I reached into my wallet, and showed him Benthram's check for the hundred thousand.

"The dirty turncoat!" Grigsby's voice was shrill.

All at once I was looking into a snub-nosed detective special, a belly-gun. Otto Grigsby was holding it on me, and I didn't like the glitter in his eye. I decided it would be worth while trying to shove the table into him, so I did. He went over backward. A bullet got wasted in the ceiling.

The door popped open, and Lt. Herndon took a long dive onto Otto Grigsby. By the time Grigsby was pulled to his feet, the handcuffs were on him.

LATER, of course, in front of the police, Grigsby talked, and Benthram didn't. I wonder if a hundred million dollars will be enough for Benthram's lawyers to work with in trying to free him. The cynical say that it will. I wonder.

# A Good Club

A STIRRING STORY OF CONFLICT BETWEEN CHRISTIAN AND PAGAN DURING THE AGE OF THE VIKINGS.

by DE WITT NEWBURY

KOLBEIN EDRICSON was only a boy when he first doubted the gods.

On a summer morning he stole from his father's farmstead and made for the mountain. He carried a horn-handled knife in his belt, and meant to use it.

Even in those days he had earned his nickname. For he liked to swing a stout stick when the Loardale boys played together. The others fought with wooden swords; but Kolbein broke their swords and bruised their bodies, so they called him *Klubba*.

Now he meant to cut a real cudgel of oak. It must be just the right length, knotted at the end. And no lowland tree would do. It must come from the heights where wood grew gnarled and tough.

Climbing the first slope, he paused to let the wind blow through his tousled red hair. He looked down on the dale of Loar, with the River Otta flowing through. The best valley in Norway!

He saw his father's log house, the barns and shielings, the planted fields. He could see other steadings, too, all solid and prosperous. None was walled with a garth, a stockade of timbers. No need of that; the great chief, Gudbrand, ruled this district and gave the farmers his protection. Of course they fought under his leadership when danger threatened. That was why a bonder's son must grow strong and weapon-wise.

Kolbein didn't climb any higher; he had thought of a better plan. The world was wonderful and the day was long. He would go adventuring, go farther than he had ever been before!

He trotted along the slope. The dale lay deep on his left, and Loarfell rose steeply on his right. Beyond that was the mighty mass of Jotunfell, its flanks dark with pines, its top still white with snow.

Sturdy legs carried him along—between great trees, over fallen trunks, across bare ledges and foaming runlets, until he had rounded Loar Mountain, heading south.

He caught his breath when he saw the vista of river, mountain and valley. Surely marvelous country lay ahead! Gudbrand of the Dales dwelt somewhere there, in a great garth full of riches—the plunder of Viking raids. There was a God-house, too, with an awesome image.

Yes, Gudbrand was a mighty man, the *herse*, the district chief. He was priest of Thor; for the War God must have a warrior priest. Kolbein Club would serve him some day, he thought, would sail away in a dragon ship to crack the heads of outlanders!

The thought reminded him of his errand. He went on again, how far he never knew. But he came to a crag that thrust out steeply from the mountainside. Young oaks grew at the base; they were twisted and knotty, tough as iron. He climbed to them, pulling out his knife.

He chose carefully and cut the hard wood. At last he had a fine cudgel, worth the effort and blistered hands! He would hurry home with it.

Kolbein only took two steps. Then he stood still, looking skyward. An eagle was soaring there. Sweeping lower and lower in great wide-winged circles.

Now he could see it; now the pine-tops hid it. Was it an eagle of the gods? There was a sacred place, he had heard; a *Gottstein* where offerings were made. This crag, perhaps?

THE enormous bird was wheeling nearer. If Kolbein clambered higher, he could see it clearly. Frightened and yet eager, he scrambled up. Yes, there was a path where the cliff joined the mountain. There were even steps cut in the rock.

Panting, he came out on the summit, a rocky table. Once more he stopped to stare. Not at the eagle, this time, but at something lying on the smooth stone: Something blue and red—a bundle of cloth.

It was a rolled cloak, he saw, a blue cloak with scarlet fringe. Then he saw the cloth move, saw a puckered baby-face under a fold. He heard a whimper. Instantly he understood. This was indeed the God-stone; and here was an unwanted child, left for an offering—to Odin, for Thor would have no infants. And Odin's messenger had come to fetch it!

HE should run from the place, Kolbein knew; he should leave the god's property alone. Yet he could only think of that pitiful, wailing bundle, and the great bird swooping down. Somehow he knew that the child would not be borne to Asagard. No, it would be torn with beak and claw, carried to a bone-littered eyrie.

"Odin!" he screamed. "You are cruel! Unmanly!"

Next moment he was standing astride the bundled cloak. A broad shadow swept over him, he felt the rush of wind and heard the loud beat of wings. In another moment he was fighting for his life—and more than his own life. Fighting Odin's eagle!

A huge thing, it was, stronger than himself.

The eagle struck uncertainly at first, surprised to find him there. A talon ripped his shoulder. He swung his club; it whacked heavily, and feathers flew. The bird swerved off, only to swoop again, claws out, furious at being balked.

Kolbein struck at the claws. He saw the monster threshing above him—saw the round, fierce eyes, the curved beak and wide wings. He struck again and again with all his might.

"That from Kolbein Klubba!" he shouted. "Go tell your master!"

Talons gashed his head and arms. Wings battered him, so he reeled and staggered. But he must not fall—or tread on the rolled cloak! He must not let the preyer reach its prey!

*Illustrated by* JOHN RICHARD FLANAGAN

***Gudbrand flushed darkly and pointed at the towering shape of bronze. "No one can see your Great One! But our god stands before your eyes. We know he is always here to help!"***

*In a moment Kolbein was fighting for his life.*

Somehow he kept afoot, hammering blows upward. He drew his knife, too, and stabbed up, left-handed.

And now the eagle was down on the rock—its hooked beak half open, feathers awry, blood dripping from its breast. It lifted its wings. Half flying, half running, it rushed at him.

Kolbein flung up his club. With all the strength in his hard young body he struck at the long flat head.

The eagle lurched aside! A fluttering mass, it tumbled to the far edge of the cliff and disappeared.

The boy lowered his cudgel. He rested his aching arms, and wonder filled him. He had conquered a bird of the gods! How could that be possible? Yet it was so!

Between his feet, the child stirred and whimpered.

THE farm-folk were all at the board when Kolbein reached his father's house. A meal couldn't be delayed for a straying lad.

Everyone stared when he came in. His father and mother, the bearded carls and serving-women. All turned curious faces.

He was bruised and bloody, the shirt torn from his back. He carried a cloth-wrapped bundle cradled in his arms. He spoke boldly.

"I killed the eagle! I took *this* from the God-stone!"

The baby wailed.

It was Hild, the old thrall-wife, who first found voice. "An offered child!" she screeched. "Are you out of your senses, boy? You have sinned—you'll bring misfortune on us! You should run and put it back!"

The farm-carls moved uneasily, shuffling their feet under the board. "What a thing to do!" they muttered. "It will bring bad luck!" "He must give the brat back quickly!" "Or anger the gods!"

"This for the gods!" Kolbein shook his cudgel. "They must be angry now for my beating of their bird!"

Men and women cried out at that. But the *husfroya,* Ingerid, came and took the baby from her son. She lifted a fold of wrapping, then held the weak thing close.

"A girl-child!" she said. "We will keep her if she lives, whatever happens! Her name shall be Adela."

Edric, the burly *husbonder,* stepped up to look. "Yes, a girl. Offered for a handmaiden to Odin, no doubt. As to who offered her—well, I'd better say nothing, though I have a notion. That's a lordly cloak! No poor bonder gave that with his sacrifice."

He turned to Kolbein, frowning and smiling at the same time. "So my son has worsted a sacred eagle? Robbed a high altar? Hardy work for a carling with a club!"

The boy stood straighter, not minding his hurts or the ache in his bones. "It's a good club," he said.

Edric was a good man. He spoke to the farm-folk, tugging at his brown beard. "We will keep the babe. I think it would be a greater sin to give her up! Say nothing to any of the neighbors. If any ask, she is a motherless one sent by my wife's kindred in Sogn, for us to foster."

So it was decided. They kept the child and kept the secret. The blue cloak was hidden in a chest, away from curious eyes. It was a splendid garment lined with ermine, but too dangerous to display.

At first the carls grumbled. "Odin will take her back, one of these days!" "He'll send a sickness—or a wolf or bear." "Send a curse to us, too. Our cattle will die, our crops wither!"

But no bad luck followed. Adela lived and throve on goat's milk. Gradually the farm-folk forgot their fears; though they felt some awe of her and treated her respectfully. To Edric and Ingerid she was a foster-daughter.

To Kolbein she was a special charge. He played with her as she grew older. And when she was big enough to run in the summer fields, he watched with club on shoulder. Let an eagle come for her now! Let wolf or bear rush from the woods to snatch her!

Sometimes he wondered who had laid her on the God-stone. He wondered at the cruelty of gods.

ADELA grew into a hearty maid, straight and trim. Her hair was a flowing brightness, her face like one of the pink-petaled flowers she liked to gather.

Kolbein grew always taller and broader, stronger of limb, until he was nearing manhood, and it was time for him to finish manly training. Nothing like a viking-faring for that! All Norse lads looked forward to such a time.

But he didn't serve the great chief, Gudbrand, after all.

Things were not going well in Norway. The kingdom had been broken up since Olav Trygvason's death, with no folk-ruler of the old Yngling line any more. Only the jarls ruled, the sons of Hacon the Mighty. They served a foreigner, the Danish king;

and Danish tax-gatherers went here and there, claiming *scot.*

Because of this unrest, Gudbrand of the Dales stayed home to guard his district. Yet—for the same reason—it was well for young fellows to learn warfare, both by land and sea.

Edric talked matters over with his son, beside the evening hearth-fire, while his *husfroya* taught the little foster-daughter to sew and embroider.

"Of all battle leaders," Edric said, "young Olav Haraldson seems to be the hardiest. We hear the best news of him."

Kolbein agreed. "He is harrying the English, they say. Always victorious!"

"Ay, he's a notable *sikling*—a seaking. He comes of the best Norse blood, and is akin to Trygvason."

They looked at each other, the son eagerly, the father with grave approval. "I'll join Olav!" Kolbein declared. "There are both merchant ships and longships sailing over."

Edric tugged his beard. "I would give you a ship if I were rich. As it is, I'll fit you with mail and weapons. The *sikling* will be glad to enlist such a lusty dreng."

Then Kolbein smiled across the round hearth. "One thing makes me sad. I must leave my *meyla,* my little maid. Never mind! I'll win wealth and bring it back to her."

The child looked at him with weeping eyes; they shone blue through the tears, like cornflowers full of dew. "Only come back, Kolbein! I don't care about the wealth!"

TIME went by, bringing changes. The end of another year found Kolbein braced on a longship bench, swinging an oar. And the ship was cleaving English water.

Edric had been right. Olav, the young Viking chief, had accepted a sturdy fellow. The lad had changed. He had come to his full strength. His shoulders bulked hugely, his limbs were corded and thewed. Men named him the Stark now—the Strong—though friends still called him Klubba.

He wore a helm and a ring-brynie, a coat of mail. A round shield hung at the ship's railing, a sword at his belt. But his favorite weapon lay close beside him: An oaken cudgel, knobbed with iron.

Things had changed in England, too. The Danish king, Sweyn Forkbeard, had invaded with a great host. Sweyn was the enemy of all free Norsemen, the oppressor of their land. And so Olav Haraldson had made peace with Ethelred, the English king, and had joined him to fight the Danes.

Olav had even changed his religion! Taught by an English priest, he had turned *Kristmann.* Some of his men had turned also; others remained doubtful. Weren't the Old Gods always strong in battle? Wouldn't the change bring weakness and defeat?

Bishop Sigurd had talked to Kolbein, telling him strange things. You should not shed innocent blood or harry the helpless; that seemed reasonable. But you should also love your enemy.

"How can I do it?" Kolbein asked, puzzled.

The priest rubbed his shaven chin. "By making him your friend."

"Ay!" Kolbein nodded, understanding. "A manly enemy, such as your King Ethelred."

"And if a man strikes you on one cheek," the bishop went on, "you should not strike back, but turn the other cheek to him."

"Humph!" Kolbein grunted. "And what if he gives me a second blow?"

Sigurd considered. "Then, my son, I think you could slay him for a stupid heathen. And the Lord would strengthen your arm!"

Kolbein hoped he was right. At any rate, the test had come now. . . .

The Danes had taken the town *Lundunaborg*—the English called it London. They held both the main town and the southern stronghold, across the river. The two were joined by a long bridge of timbers set on log piles. It had stout bulwarks, and was defended by fighting-carls with bows and spears and plenty of stones for throwing.

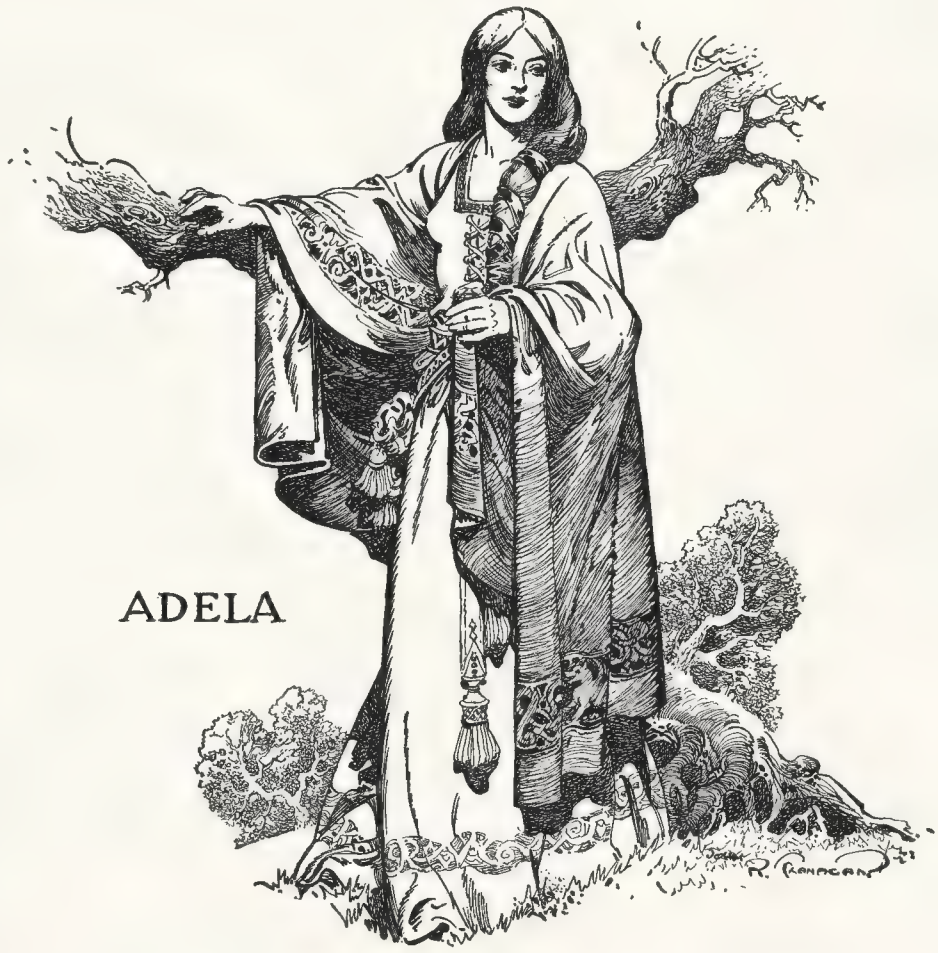
The English army was not strong enough to assault both towns. It was attacking Southwark; but the Danes could pour reinforcements across the bridge. Manning it, they could stop all craft from passing up or down.

Therefore this bridge must be captured. And therefore the Viking chief had ordered his ships against it—twenty ships, large and small. In the biggest—Olav's own dragon—Kolbein Club swung an oar.

The longship was crowded, like all the others. Mailed men stood on the stem; tall in their helms, holding strung bows and bright-bladed spears. The rowers were ready to fight, too. And every shield was painted with the Christian cross, by Olav's command.

Pulling steadily, Kolbein watched his chief. Olav Haraldson stood high on the afterdeck. He was beardless as yet, and not tall. But he was broad; already men called him *Digre,* the Thick. His yellow mane curled under a gilded helm, and his eyes seemed to shoot blue sparks. His shield bore a gilded cross.

Hearing a roar of voices, Kolbein cast a glance over his shoulder. The bridge was full of shouting Danes.



Whiskered stalwarts, they lined the defenses with their bristling weapons; and all their shields were painted with the emblems of the Old Gods—with ravens and eagles, with heads of wolves and bears.

The twenty craft swept nearer to the forted bridge. Suddenly Olav Digre uttered a bull-bellow. "Oars in! Loose the arrow flight!"

Ships lost way as stem-men and waist-men lifted their bows. Kolbein shot with the others. Arrows flickered up in a storm, striking into the bulwarks and into Danish shields.

The Danes yelled defiance.

"Oars out!" Olav thundered. "Way, ho—give way! Hold again! Cast your spears!"

The spears volleyed, heads flashing as they arched high. Danes were spitted. Some fell back from the bulwarks; some tumbled, heavy with mail, to splash in the river.

Now the ships were close under the bridge, swinging broadside. Norsemen grappled the piles with iron anchors. Raised by brawny arms, they reached at the bulwarks. They hooked their axes into the timbers, trying to climb.

From above came battering blows and a rain of missiles—arrows and spears and stones. Climbers were beaten down, wounded, killed. Ships rocked under the pelting. Some heeled and took water. Only their shields saved the crews.

"Enough!" Olav bellowed. "Sheer off!"

The battered vessels swung out of range. Four were crippled, barely able to keep afloat. The defeated fleet rowed away downriver, while the Danes jeered from the bridge.

In Olav's ship a big carl scowled at his cracked shield. "By Hela, Mother Death," he growled, "I think we must paint out these crosses!"

Kolbein spoke loudly, so the whole ship-gang heard. "Why, *Kristmenn*, they have smitten only one cheek! We should give them a chance at the other!"

Olav Digre himself boomed an answer. "We'll try again. The second trial is always best."

***"Our Master is the mightiest of all!" Bishop Sigurd said.***

That second trial came soon.

The ships were safely stranded on the river shore. For three days the Norse *vaerings* were busy, repairing them and rigging roofs on the largest ten—things such as never had been seen before!

It was Olav's plan. First he ordered that stakes be set upright in the ships and cross-braced. Then he directed his men to pull down some deserted huts, built of woven branches daubed with clay. They tore down whole sides of wattle-work to cover the stakes, and laid raw ox-hides over all.

When the ten craft worked upriver again, each was protected by a long shed with slanting eaves. And a coil of rope—Norse cable of twisted walrus-hide—lay on each afterdeck, an end knotted about the stern-post.

The covered vessels were unwieldy. They were well ballasted, though, manned only by the strongest oarsmen and a few afterguards. Kolbein Club sat on his bench, of course, grinning at a huge joke. His mates were all grinning at the same joke. Olav Digre stood beside the tiller—and beside the coil of rope.

The ten longships swam the tide, all in line. They seemed like dreadful sea-monsters with gaping dragon heads and humped backs. They neared the bridge; it was crammed with Danish drengs as before. The Danes began to shout laughter and insults.

Kolbein swung his oar, still grinning. Arrows whacked on the roof above, then spears. Some of the points stuck through. He paid no attention; Olav knew his business, that was certain.

"Larboard oars back!" the order came. "Stroke starboard!"

The ten ships whirled leftward.

"Stern all!"

The ships shot up against the bridge, sterns first. Weapons hammered the shed-roofs, heavy stones thudded and rolled off. The roofs shook and sagged, but they held.

By his stern-post, Olav Digre was ready with the walrus rope. On every ship a man was ready! Each slung his cable-end around a pile and made it fast.

"Stroke all!" Olav bellowed. "Way! Way!"

Oars churned and water swirled as the rowers heaved. The great ships shot downriver, the ropes pulled taut behind. They brought up with a terrific jerk. And then the oarsmen set their feet and strained, the tough oars bent.

From the bridge came cracking, rending sounds, with a confusion of hoarse voices—yells of rage, of fear or warning. Pile after pile leaned forward, dragged from its bracing and from its footing in the mud.

The whole long structure swayed, bent in the middle and came down! Crumpling and crashing, hurling its mass of warriors pell-mell!

They were hurled into a welter of broken beams and seething water. They fought each other, fought the splintered logs and clutching tide. They sank; or clung to floating timbers if they could.

The Norse ships swam away, each towing an uprooted pile as if for a trophy.

Kolbein nudged his mate. "What now, *fellagre*? Will you repaint your shield?"

Laughing, the fellow shook his iron-capped head. . . .

The war ended soon after this. The Danes surrendered both Southwark and London, and asked for peace.

AGAIN time passed, more years than one. Great were the changes they brought.

A spring morning found Kolbein on the road—the road home. He came from Orkedale, marching sturdily southward over the steep path called *Stavabrekka.*

He was straight as a pine and strong as an oak, with a russet beard. He went fully mailed, shield at his back and sword at his side. A leathern sack was slung over one shoulder. On the other rested his iron-bound, iron-knobbed club.

Kolbein had seen the world. Yet the green dale of Loar was the goodliest sight of all! He forded the Otta River and lengthened his stride. Some workers were sowing barley in his father's field; they stared at the stranger, then shouted welcome.

He met his parents at the steading. A good meeting! He dropped sack and club to clap a big arm around Ingerid and grip Edric's hand. They had not changed as much as he.

But there stood a tall girl—a woman grown! She gazed at him with wide eyes of cornflower blue. Her cheeks turned milky-white, then glowed with the very light of dawn. Like a child she came into his arms.

He swung her up, a good armful. "Still my *meyla,* my little maid! I have brought you a bagful of treasure. Southland silks, rings for your fingers, chains for your neck!"

Her voice came faintly, muffled against his breast. "All I want is you, Kolbein! And to know that you are home to stay."

"Yes," he answered, "by the favor of King Olav."

King Olav! That was the greatest change of all. For the Viking had continued to fight the Danes. He had driven them out of Norway, along with their friends, the sons of Jarl Hacon. He had beaten them in a sea battle in Oslo Fiord.

*"I killed the eagle! I took* this *from the God-stone!"*

And when he had freed the land, the land-folk had chosen him to rule it. . . .

That night Kolbein had news for Edric. "The King is at Orkedale with his men; they will be here tomorrow. I came first to warn you."

Edric tugged his graying beard. "Such a visit is an honor. We will greet him well, and feast him. How many men?"

"Only sixty, his bodyguards." Kolbein slapped his broad chest. "I am one! But this is more than a visit of friendship. Olav Digre is just, yet he will have his way. He has commanded that every one turn *Kristmann.* Almost all have done so. Only here and there—as in these dales—people hold to the old faith."

His father frowned thoughtfully. "I see that your shield is painted with a cross."

"The mark of the new religion. I have taken it, and so must you. There are only a few hard rules. You must make friends with your enemy, if he deserves it. And if an unruly fellow strikes your face you should let him strike again before you slay him."

"Queer rules!" Edric scowled.

"There are better. Christianity does away with old bad things, such as giving children to the gods."

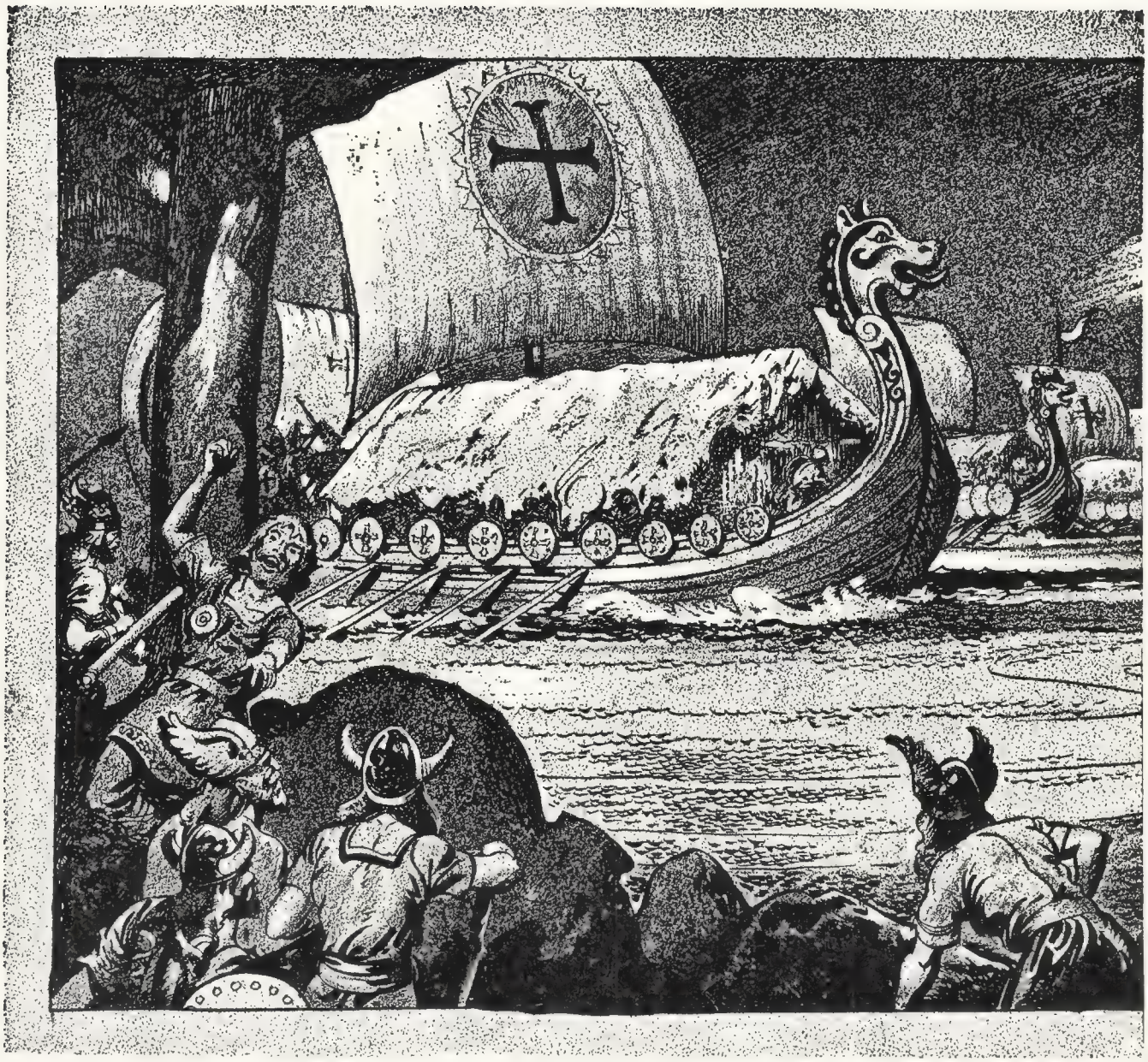
Edric's face cleared. "I will obey the king. He has been lucky, so his religion must be strong. But the men of the inner valleys are stiff-necked, set in their ways. They will follow their chief."

Kolbein nodded. "That is why Olav comes. To match his strength against Gudbrand of the Dales!"

"With only sixty drengs?" Edric wondered.

Kolbein thumped his chest again. "His *vaerings,* his guardsmen! They are worth six hundred."

Somehow the news spread. Some of the Loardale farmers slipped away



*The ten longships swam the tide, all in line, like dreadful*

to warn the *herse*. Gudbrand still ruled his district like a king. Now both his power and priesthood were threatened.

NEXT day Olav Haraldson and Bishop Sigurd reached the valley, riding dun horses of the true Norse breed. The guardsmen trooped behind in good order. Olav was as stocky as ever, only now a fleece of yellow beard covered his chin.

He called out, pointing down the dale: "Do the folk gather for a Thing-meeting?"

Kolbein had rejoined the troop. He looked and saw men swarming up beside the river—farmers, armed for war.

"No, King," he answered. "They mean to withstand us."

Olav swung to the ground. "The shield-wall!" he ordered.

Quickly the guardsmen formed a wedge. Thirty to a side, shields touching, and each with a leveled spear. The King was foremost. Kolbein was next on the right.

The wedge moved over the riverside pastures, sheep scampering before it. The Dale-men had halted to form ranks. They raised a din of war cries, shook swords and axes in the air.

Empty threats! A few farmers hastily summoned from their fields, they had no stomach for the array of overlapping shields and bristling spears. They scattered like the sheep.

All but their leader, a young man in a gilded helm, bright hair to his shoulders. He stood his ground manfully, shouting for the flying to rally.

Olav halted the advance. "Fetch me that carling—unhurt."

Kolbein trotted forward alone, swinging his club. The youngster met him hardily with shield and sword, and he chuckled in admiration. "A handsome cub! Yet now your luck is out."

He thumped the other's shield, and it split. He knocked the sword aside, and the blade broke short. Gently he rapped the gilded helm. Its wearer sprawled on the ground, eyes rolling.

Kolbein slung him over a shoulder and came back, grinning. He had not been hurt—very much.

Back in Edric's steading, they laid the senseless lad on a bench. The women bustled around him, bathing his head with cold water. When he sat up dizzily, they gave him a horn of ale.

Then Olav Digre questioned him. He looked at the blocky figure with the curly beard and sparkling eyes, puzzled but unafraid. "I am Arne Gudbrandson," he answered.

"I thought so," Olav rumbled. "Your father is chief over all the

*sea-monsters. The Danes began to shout laughter and insults.*

Dales, I hear, and keeps the God-house."

"That is true," Arne said. "Because he is the greatest warrior."

"What sort of god does Gudbrand serve?"

Arne rubbed his sore head. "It is an ancient image of Thor, made of bronze. Every Thor's-day my father slays an ox and sprinkles the blood. Afterward we feast on the meat. A portion is offered to the god, with four loaves of bread."

Olav frowned but spoke more gently. "I grant you peace, carling. Go back to your father. Give him my greeting, and bid him to meet me here in Loardale. We will hold a Thing and talk matters over like reasonable men."

Kolbein had been watching while Adela poured ale for Arne, son of Gudbrand. The boy was the older; yet both had the same lithe slenderness and hair of the same bright gold. Their faces matched.

He nudged Edric and whispered, "Do you see it, too?"

"The likeness?" Edric muttered. "Yes! I am not astonished."

Kolbein turned to his mother. "The cape? The blue cape, ermine-lined and scarlet-fringed, that wrapped her on the rock? Have you kept it?"

"It is in the chest," Ingerid told him. "As good as new."

"A fine cloak," Kolbein breathed, "Perhaps she will wear it soon."

THE meeting was held in the widest meadow.

Dale-men began to gather early, though the weather threatened a storm. They came in armed bands, and every whiskered face wore an angry look. Waiting for the chief, they argued in rough voices, or they sat on their shields and drank ale from leather flasks.

Gradually the field filled. The King's men assembled from the steadings where they had been quartered. They formed a half-circle, leaning on their spears.

Olav had been Edric's house-guest, a good companion over the ale. Now —a king again—he marched out to his place. Bishop Sigurd came too, wearing his miter and embroidered robe.

Kolbein stayed close to them, in case of trouble. He looked eastward when he heard a great sound of shouting. The chief, Gudbrand, was riding up the valley, leading a host of friends and tenants.

Gudbrand of the Dales was big-boned and stout, with a gray beard, cut square. He held his head up proudly, knowing well his power and importance. His son, Arne, rode beside him. Behind rolled a horse-

drawn cart; and on it loomed a monstrous thing.

The chief and his son dismounted, the cart creaked up. Half a dozen carls, grunting and sweating, lifted out the load and set it on the ground. The image of Thor!

A figure of green bronze, larger than life. Helmed and bearded, clad in scaly mail and holding a hammer. It rested on a round base of wood, cracked with age.

The meeting was complete, a mass of men ringing an open space. One side of the ring was densely packed. Hundreds of Dale-men were crowding there, freeholders and rent-paying bonders, all ready to quarrel. They could fight as well as farm!

On the other side stood the sixty guardsmen, tall in cowled helms and long ring-brynies with their spears at rest. Every shield bore a painted cross. They would battle the heathen if need be!

GUDBRAND had the first say. Arne remained silent with folded arms. He would not speak against the captor who had granted him peace.

"Health, Olav Haraldson!" the chief began. "You may be a good king, yet you come on a bad errand. It may cost your kingship and your life! We have heard of the new religion, which would teach us strange things and forbid old customs!"

Bishop Sigurd struck his crook-headed staff on the ground. "Our faith teaches well! It forbids strife between good men. It forbids evil ways: blood offerings, and the sacrifice of babes."

Gudbrand's ruddy color faded. Then he flushed darkly and pointed at the towering shape of bronze. "No one can see your Great One! But our god stands before our eyes. We know he is always here to help!"

The Dale-men roared agreement.

When the clamor died, Olav raised his rumbling voice. "A fine god you have! How can he help, who cannot even walk alone? You feed him, too—but how can he eat? If Thor lives, he is far away in Asagard. How can he be a dumb, dead idol?"

The chief clenched angry fists. "This is the sign of a god, not the god himself. Yes, we offer food, and the platters are always emptied in the night! Perhaps Thor comes into the image, by his magic, and makes it live."

The bishop groaned, but the king smiled.

Gudbrand drew breath. "This man with the two-horned hat—whom you call *Biskop*—he talks of teaching. And you mock at our god-sign. Well, teach us! Show us a sign of yours!"

Olav glanced up at the sky; the clouds were thinning. "You'll see a sign very soon," he rumbled, "and I think Thor will suffer some bad luck." He muttered aside: "Come near, Kolbein. Be ready!"

Kolbein gripped his club tighter; the great iron-knobbed cudgel rested on his shoulder.

Suddenly the clouds parted overhead, letting a flood of sunshine fall over field and crowding men. It dazzled unready eyes, flashed on arms and armor.

"You see it!" Olav shouted. "The sign of our Master, who made the sun to light and warm us all! *Strike well, Kolbein Klubba!*"

Kolbein struck well.

THERE was a ringing crash—and Thor's image toppled, bursting into fragments. Bits of thin old bronze flew every way. The head landed upside down. Even the legs were shattered, leaving the wooden base empty.

No need for a second blow!

A moan of horror went up from the Dale-men. It died into silence; every man was staring in amazement. That block of wood was hollow, and the space held a nest of rubbish. Out of it jumped a dozen big rats. They ran here and there, hid in the grass or darted between men's feet. The rats were fat!

Olav broke the silence with a bellow of laughter. "Behold the gods who ate your offerings! You worship vermin!"

Gudbrand was too dumfounded for anger. He looked down at the ruins of his idol, with knitted brow and big hands twisted together. "Truly," he admitted ruefully, "Thor can give us no help—if he cannot aid himself! You are right. Your Master is mightier."

"Our Master is the mightiest of all!" Bishop Sigurd said.

"Stronger than all the Old Gods?" Gudbrand's voice was husky. "Then listen, King and *Biskop*. I will tell what I never told before."

He squared his stout shoulders. "Long ago I gave a gift to Odin. I had hoped for a second son; but the child was a girl, and my wife died at her birth. There was bitterness in me. I wrapped her in a cape—my best, fit for an offering—and carried her to the God-stone. It was early morning and no one knew.

"But when I reached my garth again, the bitterness turned to grief. I wanted the babe, and hurried back to claim her. Ay, galloping my horse through the dales, scaling the mountain afoot. Too late. There was blood on the stone, and eagle feathers. Nothing else."

Gudbrand's voice grew huskier, half choked. "I told folk that the child was in the oaken coffin with her mother. That was not so. She was with Odin; and I have felt sorrow ever since."

He paused to breathe deeply. Young Arne went to him, trying to speak comfort. He pushed the lad away, glancing anxiously from the bishop to the king.

"Tell me, can your Mightiest One take from our greatest god? Take my daughter away and give her back to me?"

Olav Digre answered: "Ask, Gudbrand! Ask in your heart. The Master of Life can do all things."

Gudbrand turned his face skyward.

Kolbein edged through the crowd, and ran to his father's house.

For long minutes the chief stood motionless, waiting. At last his gray-bearded chin sank on his breast.

A word from Olav roused him. "Look!"

Slowly he lifted his head. A girl stood before him! A tall girl, wrapped in a blue cloak. The sunshine made a glory of her hair and glowed on her face. Timidly she held out one hand; the other was tightly clasped in Kolbein's fist.

Gudbrand's face turned white, his big frame trembled. His eyes were unbelieving, then full of wonder.

"My daughter!" he murmured. "Surely my daughter! She bears her mother's likeness. And the cape—the cloak of offering—I remember it well. It is the same!"

"Have you no doubt?" Olav rumbled.

"No doubt, no doubt at all! My daughter! Grown woman-high and fair as Freya!"

"Do you doubt the power of our *Kristmann* faith?"

"No, King! I accept it gladly, for all my folk!"

OLAV laughed. "We'll be friends yet, in such a case. That will be better than shedding each other's blood."

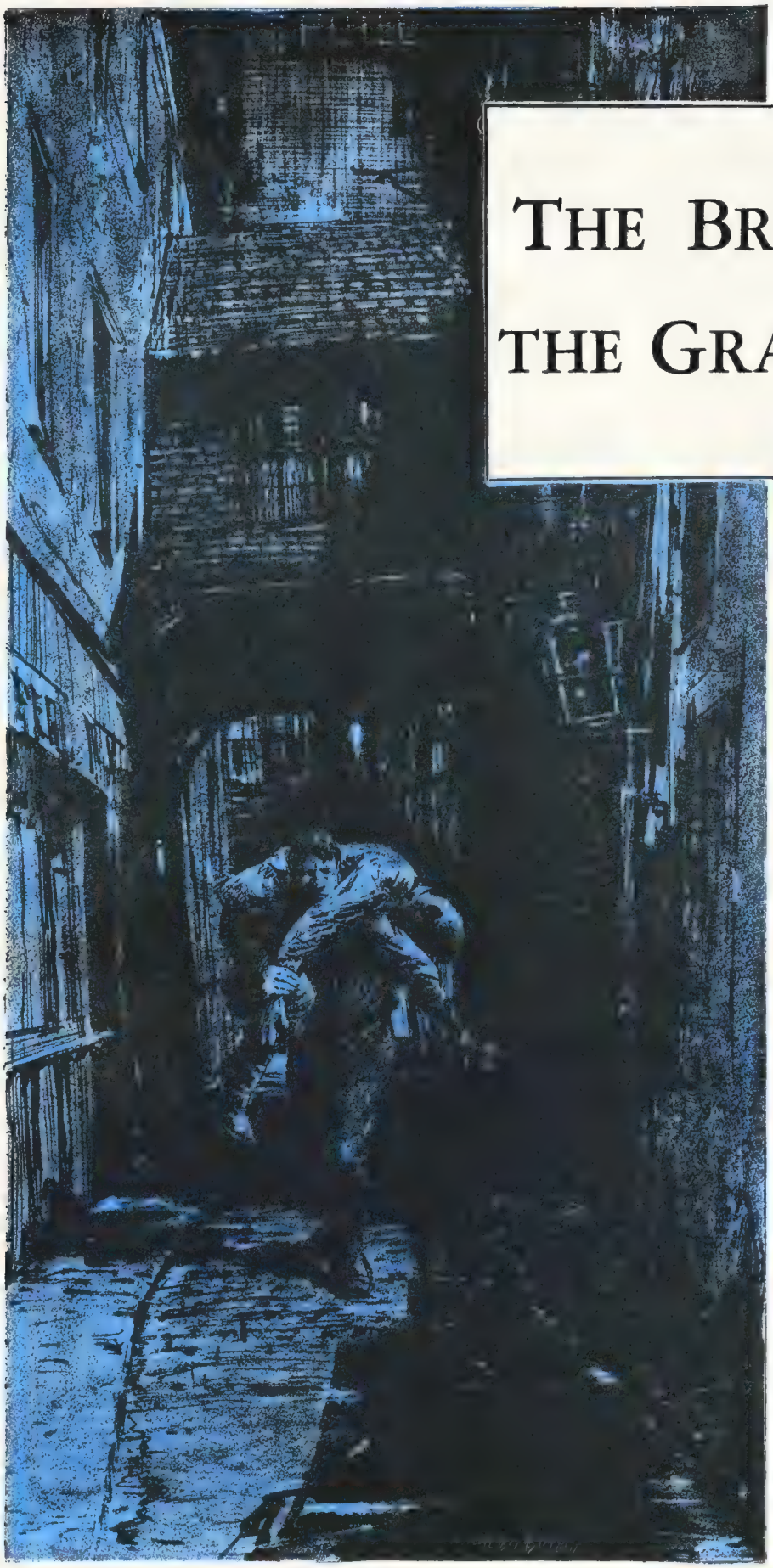
"We are friends already," Gudbrand declared. "I'll pull down my God-house and build one of your sort. Your *biskop* will teach me how to worship there. . . ."

So the Thing-meeting ended; with a joyful uproar, a shouting and beating of shields that frightened all the sheep in all the meadows.

Only the maid Adela felt any discontent. She voiced it later, when alone with Kolbein.

"It is good to find such a famous father and such a handsome brother. Yet I am always given—first to Odin, now to this old man. I belong to nobody but you, who took me from the rock."

Kolbein caught her in a bearlike hug. "At any rate," he chuckled, "you have become a Christian. When I kiss you—*thus*—you must turn the other cheek!"



*The body had to be removed at once. He hoisted it to his shoulders and carried it up to the shrub-covered slope.*

# THE BRIDGE OVER THE GRAND VALLAT

AN O.S.S. MAN TAKES A TERRIFIC RISK WITH THE AID OF THE FRENCH RÉSISTANCE.

## by PAUL COREY

HE felt his way along a pitch-black alley until he heard the splashing of water: that would be the fountain in the market square.

Right here, he told himself, should be the gate to the Coupeaus' courtyard. He found it, pushed it open gently, slipped in.

The faint, spicy smell of mimosas reached him: the tree by the Coupeau kitchen door—if the Coupeaus were still living here.

The door opened, and a woman's figure appeared briefly against faint light as she came out. He crouched in the darkness and let her pass on the way to an outbuilding. Madame Coupeau? His memory told him that Madame Coupeau was a much larger person.

A rustle of clothing warned him of her return. As she passed, he moved silently, grasped her around the waist and clapped a hand over her mouth. She fought with a fury that shocked him. It took all his strength to hold her.

Finally he managed to hiss in French: "I am an American. Does Henri Coupeau live here?"

She stopped struggling so abruptly he thought she had fainted. "Does Henri Coupeau still live here?"

He felt her head trying to nod against his hand. Freeing her mouth,

he turned her around. "Who are you?" he asked softly.

"Yvette Coupeau."

The name jolted him. Yvette—but she was just a kid, not more than ten. That was ten years ago, he remembered. "Take me to your father."

"Wait at the door, monsieur." She slipped inside for a moment; then let him in.

It was the big Coupeau kitchen he remembered, but now there were two beds in it. He saw a pale old man sitting by the table in the candlelight, a child's school slate propped on the strong walking stick across his knees. It took him a moment to realize that he was looking at Henri Coupeau.

"Henri, remember me?" he whispered in English. "Bob Hardy."

Coupeau raised a crooked finger, cautioning. "We have guests." His thin, bloodless lips curled, but his hard eyes searched the American's blackened face intently. "Robert?" He recognized him. "Robert!" Grasping Hardy's waiting hand, his eyes melted into tears.

"I wasn't sure you'd be here," Hardy explained.

"I am a cripple," Coupeau whispered. "The Boche have taken all the able men."

Yvette shushed him, and he lowered his voice. "We've two of them quartered on us."

As if to prove it, they heard a clumping on the upper floor. "Quickly, the drape," warned Coupeau, and Hardy slipped behind a curtain by the beds.

A half-dressed Nazi limped down stairs on a clubfoot. "You're up late," he said to father and daughter.

"We have accounts to do," Coupeau answered.

"You are not expecting the man who slipped through our shore patrols last night, perhaps?"

"We expect no one."

With a grunt the Nazi went outdoors, and in a little while returned. This time he stopped by Yvette. He tried to stroke her cheek, but she drew away. Hardy, watching from the curtain, saw the frank scorn on her face.

"Still standing me off, Fräulein? Now, if you were good to me a little, maybe," the Nazi continued, "I could arrange for you to get more to eat."

Yvette's expression said simply that he did not exist. From overhead a voice in German called: "Come to bed, Fritz." The Nazi limped back up the stairs.

WHEN all grew quiet overhead again, Coupeau beckoned Hardy to come out. The knuckles of his thin hands were still white, grasping the stick in his lap. "They are station guards." He raised his eyes to the ceiling.

Hardy looked at Yvette as she sat quietly in the shadows, slender hands folded in her lap. No fear showed in her dark eyes, but scorn and hate seemed to stay alive in her face. He thought of Madame Coupeau and whispered: "Where is Madame?"

Coupeau shriveled. "She died last winter." He shook himself slightly. "Why are you here, Robert?"

"To blow up the bridge over the Grand Vallat." He heard Yvette take a deep slow breath, and saw Coupeau's glistening eyes searching his face.

"It crawls with the Boche," said Coupeau. "You have comrades?"

"No. I am alone."

"You cannot do it, then. The Resistance has no strength here."

Hardy said: "I want to find out the exact time Jerry pushes a munitions train through Bandol."

Coupeau pondered. "I have a friend who is *chef de gâre*. But the Boche tell him little."

"We will find a train for you, monsieur," spoke up Yvette.

The quiet certainty of her whisper startled Hardy.

"Come tomorrow night," she added. "You must go now." She let him out the door into the dark courtyard.

HARDY had work to do. He had drawn this mission because he had lived here in Bandol-sur-mer for six months, ten years ago. He knew the area, he knew the language, and he knew the Coupeaus.

He had to gamble that the Coupeaus were still in Bandol and loyal French. But that was not too big a gamble, especially the loyalty part. Henri Coupeau had lived and worked

*"A special train. . . . You were fishing. I have given you a secret."*

a dozen years in America before returning to France and buying a small store in this Riviera village.

To blow up the high, cement-arched railroad bridge over the Grand Vallat singlehanded was a greater gamble. The Air Force had tried to bomb it but the ack-ack was too heavy. Hardy and his Ranger Commander figured that the "belly bumper" could do the job if—if the Coupeaus were here and if they could clock him a munitions train.

Remembering the look on Yvette's face, he felt confident that they would get him the information.

He left the alley by the market square end, skirted the fountain and moved cautiously up past a little church. The Grand Vallat was about a kilometer beyond the village. He hunted a shallow cut which the railroad made about half a kilometer this side of the high arched bridge.

It took him an hour to reach the spot he had in mind in the darkness. Then he lay on the bank and clocked the Nazi track patrols: one every fifteen minutes. Once certain of the amount of working time between each patrol, he crawled out on to the tracks and sought for two sleepers at least fourteen inches apart. He found what he was after and tested the road ballast between them to see how easily it could be removed.

His watch told him it was three minutes until the next track patrol. He slithered up into the pulpy, prickly growth of century plants on the north bank of the railroad cut. As soon as the patrol passed, he circled up the gorse-covered ridge above Bandol to the hiding-place he had taken up last night after coming ashore.

During the rest of the night he moved his belly-bumper equipment down to a cache in the century plants. Dawn, showing behind the Mountains of the Maures, drove him back to his thicket of gorse, a breakfast on K-rations and some hours of sleep.

He was awakened by the ack-ack at the forts on Six Fours, an island this side of Toulon Harbor. Then the guns protecting the Grand Vallat bridge opened up. Scanning the sky, he saw a single plane high up, streaking toward Marseilles.

It was evidently a reconnaissance plane. "Out checking up on me already," he muttered. "Afraid I'm taking a Riviera holiday. Well, if Coupeau clocks me a munitions train, I'll give Rec. something to photograph."

When darkness came again, he slipped down to the Coupeau courtyard. There was no sound in the kitchen. He knocked lightly. Almost instantly the door opened and Yvette let him in. He thought she was smiling, but when she resumed her seat near Coupeau her face was still and sober.

"Any luck, Henri?" he whispered.

"They tell my friend little," replied Coupeau. "But he senses that tomorrow night or the night after there will be something big."

"I must know exactly or my plan will flop."

Coupeau squeezed his left hand with his right in a despairing movement. "Come tomorrow night; perhaps we can tell you then."

"Suppose the train is to pass before I can come."

Coupeau shrugged.

Yvette asked: "Where are you hiding?"

"In the hills."

"Can you see the village?"

"All the time."

*"Bien.* If we find that a train is to pass before you can come here I will go to the first pines up the shore. I will gather pine cones. First I will sit; then I will walk ten paces and back—once forth and back for each hour. After I have counted the hours, I will sit down; then I will repeat. Do you understand?"

"Yes, mademoiselle." Hardy stared at her. The quiet, determined look on her face amazed him. Even her father seemed too astonished to speak.

She said: "We will time you the train, Monsieur."

He slipped out into the dark village again.

*The dark streets seemed full of running people, forcing him to duck.*

Hardy slipped up through the village to the railroad cut. From his cache in the century plants he got a fifteen-inch square of board covered with cloth, and a sharp stick. He waited for two minutes after a patrol had passed before slipping out upon the tracks. His nerves were tense, all his senses alert.

When he located the pair of sleepers he had selected the previous night, he removed a layer of the crushed stone from between them and laid it carefully to one side. Then he dug the ballast loose with his stick and scooped it out with his hands upon his spread-out battle jacket. He worked rapidly, watching the time.

After five minutes had passed, he laid the square of cloth-covered board over the hole, smoothed the crushed stone he had saved out upon it, gathered up his jacket-load of ballast and slipped back to his hiding-place.

The next patrol passed. He marked two minutes and returned to work. This routine he repeated until he had a foot-square hole eighteen inches deep dug between the two sleepers. Then he covered it and crept back into hiding. He was ready to plant his gismo.

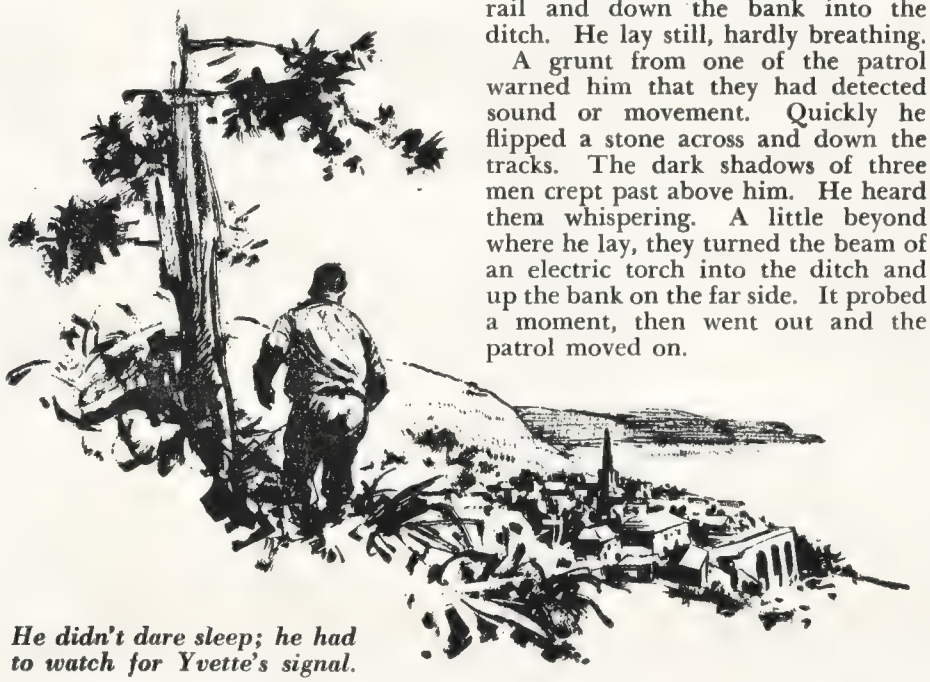
Satisfied, Hardy relaxed and rested. He let two patrols pass. Then he searched into his cache for a tin can containing two ounces of dynamite attached to a length of primer cord, four ounces of black powder and two ounces of aluminum filings. He took this and crept back out upon the tracks again.

His vigilance had slacked off a little. Everything was going well. As his fingers worked, fitting the explosive charge in the bottom of the hole he had dug, he found himself remembering the look on Yvette's face of a few hours past.

*That gal has guts,* he told himself. He remembered holding her that night when he wanted to find out about Coupeau. Her furious struggle in his arms came sharply back to his mind. He felt his blood quicken all through him.

Suddenly he glanced at his watch. Seven minutes had passed. He could hear the patrol approaching. Working frantically, he covered the hole with its false top, then rolled over the rail and down the bank into the ditch. He lay still, hardly breathing.

A grunt from one of the patrol warned him that they had detected sound or movement. Quickly he flipped a stone across and down the tracks. The dark shadows of three men crept past above him. He heard them whispering. A little beyond where he lay, they turned the beam of an electric torch into the ditch and up the bank on the far side. It probed a moment, then went out and the patrol moved on.



*He didn't dare sleep; he had to watch for Yvette's signal.*

Hardy crept back into the century plants, trembling from head to foot, sweating hard.

"Chum," he whispered to himself, "keep your mind on your job if you want to live!"

Again he clocked a patrol, then slipped out to examine his work. Everything was in place. He attached the detonator wire to the primer cord and buried it carefully off the track and all the way out to the corner of a terraced field.

He let another patrol pass, then he lugged a square, five-gallon can of gasoline and creosote out to the tracks. Removing the false top from the hole, he eased the can gently down upon the explosives in the bottom. He rechecked his connections, then covered the can with ballast stones. The belly-bumper was set.

Again the rolling barrage of dawn hurried him back to his gorse thicket. He didn't dare sleep. He had to watch for Yvette's signal if she signaled. Noon came and passed. The sun blazed down on the blue sea and the bone-gray rocks.

About four o'clock the guns opened up on another reconnaissance plane flying westward. Hardy shook his fist at the village below: "Get me a munitions train!" His glance prodded the clump of pines along the shore. It was empty.

The moon was slow going down. Eleven o'clock had passed when Hardy again slipped into the Coupeau kitchen. Henri shrugged and Yvette sat with frozen face: nothing definite—tonight perhaps or tomorrow night.

Sounds overhead drove Hardy behind the curtain. A middle-aged Nazi came down stairs, fully dressed and carrying his rifle. He was followed by the clubfooted one, who stopped in front of Yvette.

"How is my little Frenchie tonight?" His hand moved to stroke her chin and this time she did not draw away. A quiver about her lips might have been a smile. "Ah, not so cold tonight!" said the German. "Come walk a little way with me, Fräulein."

"I cannot," Yvette said faintly. "The curfew."

"Pouf on the curfew." The Nazi's hand on his rifle moved excitedly up and down.

"Where do you go, Herr Nazi?" Yvette stood up, her head bent humbly.

"To the station."

"You are on duty at night now?"

"Tonight, yes. For two hours."

"Something special?" She looked directly into his pulpy, chinless face.

"A special train at twenty-four o'clock. Everyone is on duty until it is past. I'll be off at one."

"After one o'clock, perhaps." Her voice had more strength. "I might see you then."

*"Gut!"* The brightness of her eyes aroused his suspicions. He clutched her arm savagely. "You were fishing. I have given you a secret."

"No, Herr Nazi," Yvette pleaded. "I only wanted to know when you will be free."

"That I will be sure of after the munitions have passed safely. And if you remember one o'clock."

She made no attempt to withdraw from his crushing grip. "One o'clock," she whispered.

*"Gut!"* Then with a sneering glance toward Coupeau, he went out.

They waited. Yvette turned and Hardy saw her quivering cheeks, her flashing eyes, her tight fists. He stepped from behind the curtain and she came directly to him.

"You have heard?" she whispered. "Twenty-four o'clock."

He could not face the triumph in her eyes and glanced sidewise at Coupeau, hunched and old in his chair.

"If I blow it up now," Hardy said, "both of you will be shot." He saw Coupeau's head nod ever so slightly, and continued: "We'll let this one pass and wait for another."

"No!" Her eyes widened. "You must blow this one."

"I can't do it, Yvette. Don't you see, you and your father will be the first shot for reprisal."

"What does that matter, monsieur?" The words choked her and her look of triumph changed to fury.

"No, Yvette, we'll get a munitions train that doesn't have your lives tied to it."

"What are our lives?" Her small fist struck him hard on the chest. "Blow it up, monsieur. You have the hour—twenty-four o'clock! Blow it up, do you hear! Blow it up for—for France."

He heard Coupeau sobbing softly and left without looking back.

As he moved stealthily up through the village to the railroad his thinking left him. He was preoccupied solely with caution, not with what was to come after. The track patrols were thicker, one every five minutes, and he had difficulty getting across to the detonator at the corner of the terraced field.

But once there, with the mechanism in his hand, he lay still, waiting, and thinking returned to him. Suppose the train blew up at once instead of passing on to the bridge. He would be killed instantly and needn't worry about what followed after. Would it matter then if the clubfoot had the Coupeaus shot unless Yvette—

Hardy's mouth was dry. He chewed his lips. He was sweating violently. Suppose the connections were fouled and the charge failed to go off. A sudden wild hope that the circuit was broken came over him. Perhaps he could let the train pass and not turn the button and say afterward that it was the circuit.

His hands felt slimy with sweat. *This is war,* he argued with himself, *I must act regardless of consequences. No, I am not required to sacrifice these people.* The vivid memory of Yvette's face blinded him.

His torturing thoughts were interrupted by the sound of the train. Was this it? His hands shook wildly on the detonator. He saw the shape of an engine and one or two cars—it was the pilot train and he let it pass.

The roar of wheels faded. Only the clubfoot knew that the Coupeaus had the secret of this train, he told himself, only the clubfoot could denounce the Coupeaus. His jaw grew hard abruptly: he'd blow the belly-

*The train rolled on as if nothing had happened.*

bumper; then he'd return to the Coupeaus and take care of the clubfoot. A great solid breath filled his chest.

The sound of the approaching munitions train reached him. His wildly shaking hands grew steady. Again thinking left him. The engine passed. He saw the bright flare of the firebox. It was a huge train. The small wooden French trucks jerk-jerked dimly before his eyes in the darkness.

Half the train passed. With quiet deliberation he turned the button of the detonator. A sharp, flat blast jarred the night and the five gallons of flaming gasoline and creosote were driven with the force of a torch into the belly of the passing wooden truck. The night was illumined by the flames. Shadows lurched and twisted.

The train rolled on as if nothing had happened and Hardy lay still. Perhaps that car carried no munitions; perhaps the fire would not ignite it if it did. The engine was already out over the arches. Would it stop—or go on? Would nothing ever happen? He heard screams of terror from the bridge guards. Flames licked furiously around the wooden truck he had fired. Below it he saw the tall white arches of the bridge.

Hardy seemed hypnotized by those flames. He just lay watching. Then he saw the point of fire expand in a terrific, bludgeoning, gigantic flash. Someone had flung open the doors of hell. His body bounced on the ground as if he were made of rubber. The powerful suction created by the blast pulled him, the terrace wall and everything in an avalanche toward it. He was never certain he had heard the explosion. It seemed too great even to hear.

It was still night when he regained consciousness. Where was he? What had happened? His body was covered with stones and dirt. A flickering light made him turn his head. Something still burned in the Grand Vallat, throwing uncertain light on the naked stumps of stone arches. The bridge was gone.

Yvette! The girl's name seemed to be the thing the terrible flash had revealed. He pulled himself from the stones, struggling to his feet. One exploratory step, then another—no bones were broken. His ears ached and his head rang.

He started toward the village. The dark streets seemed full of running people, forcing him to duck into shadows and behind walls. He entered the Coupeau courtyard and saw the kitchen door standing open.

The sound of Yvette's scornful laugh reached him. "Call the patrols!" she screamed suddenly. "You are the one who told us the hour."

A guttural oath was followed by the appearance of the clubfooted Nazi in the doorway, his gawky neck and chinless face grotesque above the collar of his tunic. He banged the door shut behind him and limped into the yard.

Hardy let him pass; then he leaped upon him from behind, locking his arms around that gawky neck. He bent the German backward and flung back his legs. They both crashed to the ground. A vertebra snapped like a miniature explosion. The Nazi groaned. Hardy felt his victim's body jerking spasmodically and heard a boot drumming the ground in a final twitching of the limb.

He got up quickly and looked down at the dim shape with the strangely tilted head. It had to be removed at once. He hoisted it to his shoulders and carried it up to the shrub-covered slope below the station. He sprawled the body out and ripped off a sleeve of his battle jacket and left it in a stiffening hand. That would draw some of the suspicion of sabotage from the village, he told himself. Then he returned to the Coupeaus' kitchen.

Yvette knelt by her father, weeping, and the old man consoled her. Both looked up fearfully, expecting the patrol as Hardy entered. Then a smile, like nothing Hardy had ever seen in his life, spread over the girl's tear-wet face.

She got up quickly. "You have blown up the bridge!" Her voice was low and filled with awe. Then her manner changed. "You must go. Quickly! The clubfoot has gone for the Gestapo."

For an instant, Hardy felt that the look of concern in her eyes was full payment for what he'd done.

"I took care of the clubfoot," he explained. He told them what he had done with the Nazi. Then he said: "I've got to get back up the shore. A boat will be coming for me at three."

Coupeau struggled to stand. His hands reached out clutching at Hardy, drawing him into his embrace. He kissed him on both blackened cheeks, mumbling, "France will not forget."

"Take it easy, Henri," Hardy said, "you've some rugged days coming up."

Yvette followed him to the door. "You will come back sometime, monsieur?"

He hesitated. "Sure." His eyes looked a long time into her strangely tender face. He wanted to fix that look in his memory. He might not escape; he might not get back to his outfit. Yet her expression made him feel strong and certain.

The faintly spicy smell of mimosa blossoms from the tree by the door seemed to underscore his feelings. "Perhaps before the mimosas bloom again, Yvette," he said.

That half-promise to return was a small thing to leave behind. Hardy didn't think of it during the next few hours while he made his escape from the mainland.

Later, after reporting, after hours of rest, he awoke to wonder: how did the Coupeaus make out. And Yvette's intense, yet tender face would not leave his memory.

The desire to make good on that tenuous half-promise became a part of his life.

He was assigned to General Patch's staff and a part in the planning of the invasion in the south. With the news of the Normandy landings, his hopes grew. Sometimes when his eyes rested on the feathery, gray-green leaves of the mimosa outside the window of the HQ building, he would think,

"It's a long time until blossoming. I'll make it."

The commandos went ashore on Hyeres Islands on August 15. In a few days the Allies burst through the thin, brittle shell of German defenses on the Mediterranean. The troops surged inland, cut behind the naval base at Toulon and swept up the coast toward Marseilles. The village of Bandol-sûr-mer was in their path.

Hardy's job was to help handle the civilian population in liberated areas. When his jeep driver swung down the coast road past the shattered arches of the bridge over the Grand Vallat, he had a sudden feeling of triumph: *I did that.* But a quick afterthought turned him cold: What had it cost?

He tried to remember his friend Henri Coupeau as he'd last seen him, crippled and hunched. What came into his mind was the shining face of Yvette. He was filled with an empty sick feeling, a kind of fear he'd never known in his worst moments before.

"Can't this junk heap go any faster?" he demanded.

The driver began weaving the machine through the tangle of traffic. They pulled to a jolting stop near the fountain on the market square.

There was the Coupeaus' shop on the corner. The shutters were up. Hardy sprang out and went around to the courtyard. His glance took in the mimosa by the door and the heavy door closed tight.

He hesitated. He could turn back. He need never know what that night months ago had cost the Coupeaus. It had been only a little thing he'd said to Yvette about returning. She would have forgotten it.

His fist beat on the thick door but there was no answer. They might be elsewhere, he told himself. His fear was back abruptly, solid as a lump of ice. Then he heard the bolts shifting. The door opened a crack—wider.

"An American," a girl's voice whispered huskily from the dark interior. "You have taken the village?"

"Yvette?" he said.

She came into the light. Her face was thin and pale, but her eyes were suddenly luminous. "You know my name." She spoke hesitantly as if not believing any of it. "You are the one," she whispered. "You are Robert?"

Her body sagged weakly and he grasped her arms at the elbows, holding her up. "Yvette—your father—after that night." He knew he was stammering foolishly.

"We were questioned," she said slowly. "That was all." She looked away. "My father, he is in the cellar. He is all right." Her fingers sought the feathery, gray-green leaves of the mimosa and her eyes shifted back to his face, smiling. "You came back long before the mimosa is ready for blooming, Robert."

Then he knew that she had kept his half-promise with her, waiting, as he had, these past months, for this moment.

*Illustrated by Hamilton Greene*

***"You will come back sometime, Monsieur?"***
***"Perhaps before the mimosas bloom again, Yvette."***

# LONGNECK

THE TALLEST—AND ONE OF THE STRANGEST OF ALL ANIMALS IS THE CENTRAL FIGURE OF THIS COLORFUL CIRCUS STORY.

by ROBERT BARBOUR JOHNSON

"EASY, thar!" old Ben Taylor bawled, above the tractor's roar. "For the love o' Mike take it easy! Don't jerk 'er around like thet! Thet ain't no baggage wagon you're haulin'; it's perishable freight, damn it! Bring 'er in slow, an' careful."

He danced about the caterpillar's flailing treads, as it lumbered slowly across the just-erected menagerie tent of the Paterson Bros. Wild Animal Circus, towing a big red wagon by its tongue. He waved his gaunt arms; he gesticulated, like some grotesque puppet jerked on wires; his battered uniform cap, cocked on his bald old head, almost bounced off in his excitement. The other animal men, engaged in bedding down their charges after moving them in, leaned on pitchforks or bullhooks to enjoy the spectacle, and grin at it. It was a familiar sight to them; it happened almost daily. Even the wild beasts pacing in just-opened cages, the elephants working about in harness, the camels and led stock lined at pickets and champing hay, seemed to share the amusement.

But the "cat" driver looked flustered. He was young, and it was his first day on the show; and he'd never seen anything quite like old Ben in his life. Lounging on the high seat and handling his levers amid the bellowing and sparking of engine, the clatter of treads and jangle of gears, the hissing exhaust of his mighty mechanical leviathan—weirdly more lifelike in its movements than the elephants across the tent, and with the power of dozens of the great Percheron horses that it and its kind have largely replaced on modern tent-shows—guiding the monster with casual indifference, he frowned down in perplexity at the frantic little gnome that blocked his path.

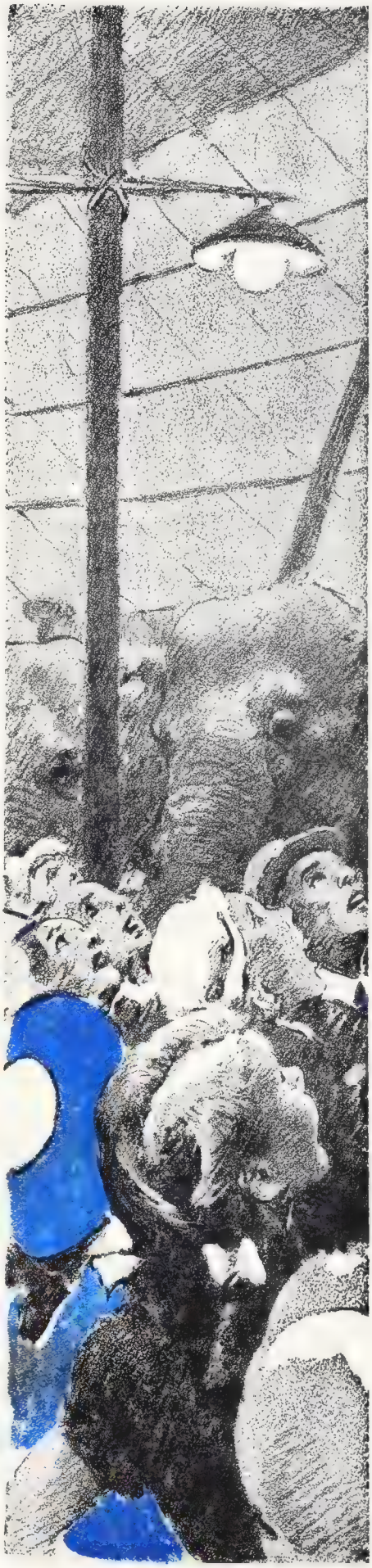
"Hey, take it easy, Grandpa!" he protested blankly. "I been pullin' in cage wagons for the last hour; I ain't wrecked one of 'em yet. I ain't gonna hurt this'n, neither. Don't get so excited."

"The wagon? I ain't worried 'bout the wagon, punk!" the ancient bawled back, unmollified. "It's what's inside it! Don't hurt them other varmints none, if you bang 'em around! I don't reckon they like it, but it don't damage 'em. But this'n—dern it, the hosses used to do it better! I sure wish we had 'em back. The world don't progress, no matter what they say! A string o' baggage stock could spot thet wagon with hardly a jar. They knowed what they was doin'—not like thet rattlin', slambangin' contrivance, thet ain't got no more sense'n its driver! Or a team o' bulls could do it."

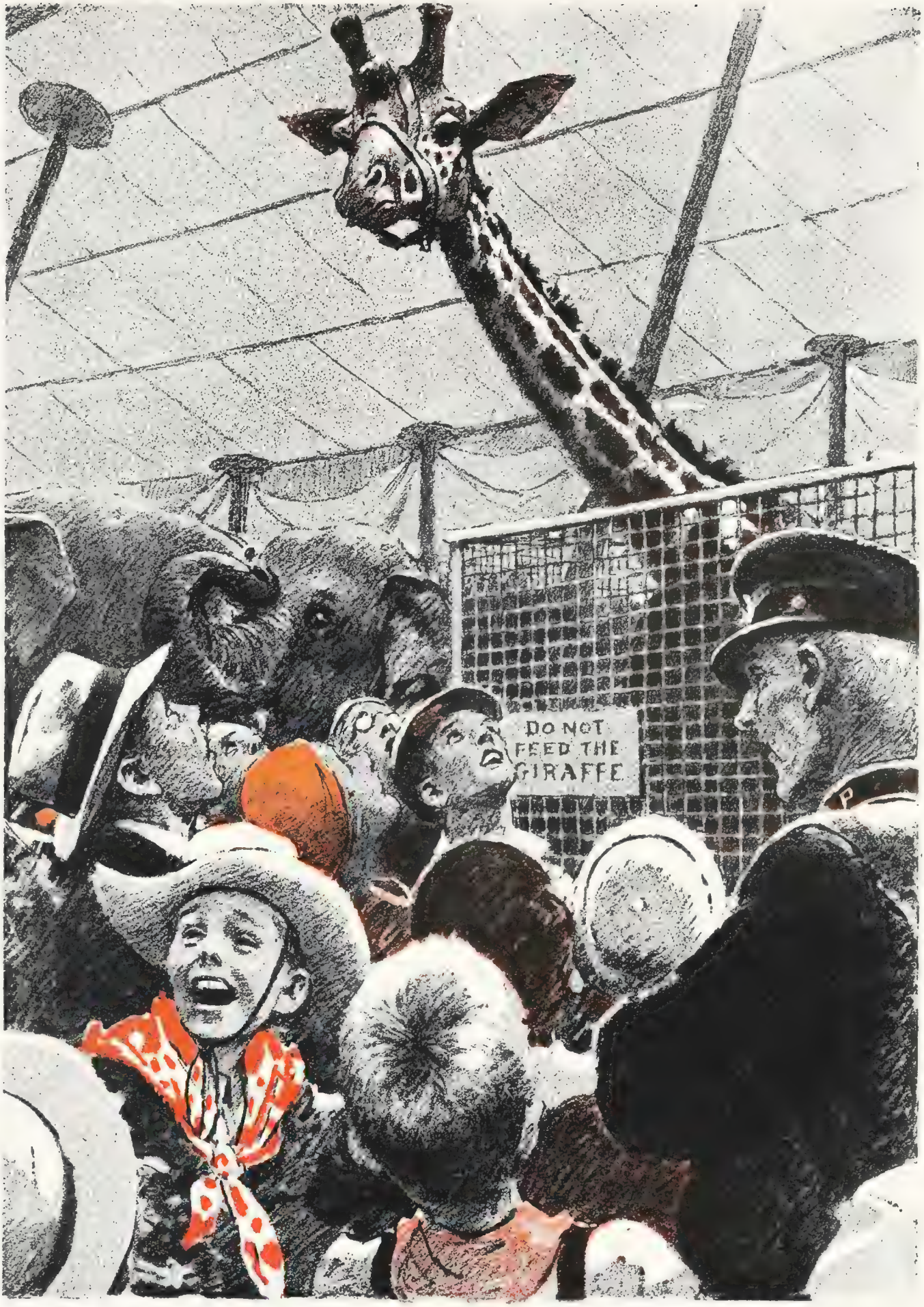
"Then why'n't you use elephants?" the driver grunted, indicating the toiling gray shapes. "Looks like they got plenty of 'em, on this show."

The old man glared up at him. "Cause Lulubelle don't like elephants, thet's why!" he snapped. "They make her nervous. Any big wild animals nigh her makes her jittery. Machines, she don't mind so much; they ain't alive—long's they don't jerk her around, thet is. If you do, she's liable to bust herself—break a leg, or even her neck; she's thet fragile. You gotta take it easy, with her."

"Okay. Okay!" The driver tried to follow instructions. He throttled his mechanism down, manipulated its sensitive treads. Towing the van forward at a snail's pace, easing it over ruts with hardly a jar—all under a torrent of advice and admonition



*Lulubelle was the belle of the menagerie, and enjoyed the attention.*


DO NOT
FEED THE
GIRAFFE

*"Lulubelle's the only thing on earth I'm interested in; I don't want no time away from her."*

from old Ben. At last he reached the center of the tent, and halted at a designated spot. He climbed down and began to unhook his tow-chains from the van-tongue, sighing with relief, and lighting up a cigarette.

"There! Hope you're satisfied, Grandpa!" he grunted. "Never took so much trouble with a wagon before, in all my trouping days. What in thunder's in there, anyway, that you have to be so all-fired careful with?"

Old Ben, who'd calmed down somewhat, now the ordeal of placing was over, threatened to become excited all over again. He put his gnarled hands on his hips, and glowered apoplectically. "My Gawd! The ign'rance o' this here younger generation!" he snapped. "Take a good look at thet wagon, punk! Mean to say you cain't tell what's inside it?"

THE youth puffed the cigarette, staring at the vehicle with curiosity. Others beside himself might have been perplexed; it was a most curious structure, long and high and narrow, with a rounded top that gave extra inches. It looked more like a canvas wagon than an animal cage; there was none of the usual scrollwork or decorations; nor was there any indication that its wooden sides opened up. Yet there were little barred ventilation windows set in its end, with occasional glimpses of something moving behind them. The forward part, projecting over the small front wheels, was strangely long and narrow, while the rear portion of it dropped in an enormous "possum belly" that barely cleared the ground, and required separate axles for the rear wheels. Hung on each side were two huge wire gratings, larger than steel arena sections; these, when assembled, would obviously form an enclosure almost as large as the wagon itself. . . .

The driver shook his head, slowly. "I give up, Grandpa!" he said. "Never saw nothing like it in my life. What is it?"

Old Ben snorted. "Why, it's a giraffe van. Nothin' new about it! Circuses been carryin' giraffes in 'em, fer I dunno how long!"

The driver's eyes widened; he whistled softly. "A longneck! Well, what'd'ya know! I didn't know there was a longneck on this show. Never trouped with one before. They're pretty rare, ain't they?"

"Rarest animal they is, on a circus," the old man grunted. "They cost ten thousand dollars apiece! In the old days, they was cheaper—nearly all th' big shows had whole herds of 'em. Now Ringlin's is the only one kin afford more'n one; they carry three or four. A couple truck shows, Kelly-Miller an' King Brothers, has singles; they show 'em in a sideshow, fer extra admission. An' we've had this'n in the Paterson Menagerie fer nigh on fifteen years; she's our feature. An' I been takin' care of her the hull time!" he finished proudly.

"You don't say!" The young man's look was admiring. "It must be a responsible job."

"Dern tootin' it is! An' not jest cause she's valuable, neither. She's so dern delicate, it keeps a body humpin', to keep her from hurtin' herself. Giraffes is built wrong! They're 'brittle,' you might say; they bust easy. I reckon it's 'cause o' their size. Lulubelle's nigh onto eighteen feet tall, you know."

Again the youth whistled. "Eighteen feet! Wow! I didn't know anything living ever got that big!"

"Oh, longnecks grows taller than thet," old Ben assured him. "Some o' the big males are nearly twenty feet. 'Course, we don't carry them with a circus; they're only good fer zoos, an' sich. Lulubelle, here, is about the biggest ever with a tent-show, I reckon. Leastways, we bill her that way!"

"But how on earth does she fold up into that wagon, in that case?" the driver marveled. "I don't see how she can raise her neck up, in there."

"She cain't! She has to keep it stretched out straight, when she's travelin'. Thet's why the van's built like it is—long an' narrer in front, an' big in back. It's all padded, inside. Her neck goes in the small part, an' her body in the big part. She cain't hardly move, once she's in; kinda like she was in a packin' case. She gits a stiff neck, sometimes, from standin' in it on long jumps. But Lordy, thet ain't nothin' to what'd happen to her, if she could stand straight! Modern civilization jest ain't built fer a critter taller'n a two-story house. She'd hang herself on telephone wires, or 'lectrocute herself on light cables, jest goin' through streets. Or bang her head off on tunnels, on the cars at night!

"In the early days, it was different; they didn't have all them wires an' stuff then. Early wagon shows used to lead 'em from town to town on halters, with the other led stock. An' even after they invented these here wagons, the tops used to open up, so as they could stand straight in the parade, an' look impressive. But not nowadays; no sirree! They gotta stoop down an' like it—for their own safety. They git used to it; they don't seem to mind. I reckon Lulubelle'd feel funny if she could stand up all the time, after all these years. An' after all, she's in her corral all day; an' it ain't got no top; she kin stretch much's she likes. She gits along."

INTEREST showed in the driver's eyes. "Guess I'll stick around, and watch you unload her. I never saw more'n a couple of longnecks; and none close up. You're going to take her out now, ain't you?"

"O' course! I never leave her in there longer'n I have to. Just's soon's I kin git her corral set up—'twon't take a minute." He lifted down one of the huge metal sections, hauled it forward with much grunting.

"Want me to give you a hand with those?" the driver offered.

"Naw! I been wrasslin' 'em all my life—easier, by myself. They don't weigh much; they're light aluminum. All I do is drag 'em down to the end of the wagon, prop 'em there, an' tie the edges together with ropes." He worked busily for a few moments, then stepped back and surveyed his handiwork. "There! That'll do, fer the time bein'. Later on, I'll drive some stakes, an' guy it down, for added strength. But that'll hold, fer now."

The driver surveyed the frail structure disparagingly. "You mean to say a critter eighteen feet high cain't bust out of that thing?" he demanded. "Why, I could knock it over myself!"

"Sure she could break out, if she wanted to! But what'd she wanta do that fer? She ain't goin' no place. That there's her home; she lives there. She likes it; she don't wanna git out of it. Beats all how folks is always thinkin' wild animals is always tryin' to break out'n their cages. They ain't. On'y time they do that's when they're fust caught. After that, if they *do* git out, they'll go back in by themselves, if they're let. Anybody

likes his own home, don't he? Critters air jest like folks!

"Now I'll jest hang this-here wire basket on the wires, an' fill it with hay. That's bait, to lure her out." He climbed up on the rickety structure, which vibrated from his weight.

"Why not just dump the hay on the ground?" the youth suggested.

OLD BEN chuckled. "You don't know much about giraffes, do you, son? They cain't eat off'n the ground. They're built wrong, I tell you. On'y way they kin touch ground is to spraddle their front legs wide, awful awkward, and reach down between 'em. An' even then, they cain't quite make it—they hafta pick things up with them sticky tongues, a bit at a time. Only way they kin really eat, is on a level with their haids. They live off'n leaves of trees, in the wild state. Some say that's how they got them long necks. . . .

"Well, guess we're ready now." He unlocked a padlock on the great rear doors, swung them open. Inside were two smaller half-doors, and a glimpse of padded walls. "I'll back her out, soon's I git this leetle runway placed—it's on'y about a foot to the ground, but you cain't take chances with an animal brittle as she is—an' git holt of her halter-rope."

"What's the extra doors for?" the driver wanted to know.

"So's she cain't kick, while I'm workin' around her in the wagon." The old man chuckled again. "She kicks worse'n a dozen mules! She wouldn't hurt me, o' course, if she knowed who 'twas. But she cain't see me; her head's away up there in the end. She cain't turn around. She's gotta back out. . . . Ho, thar, old gal! I'll have you out in a minute."

"Seems like she's awful quiet, in there," the driver mentioned. "Doesn't she ever make any noise?"

"Naw. She cain't; she's dumb, like all giraffes. They're that way, from birth; some says they ain't got no vocal cords. Anyhow, they don't ever make a sound, no matter what. It's kinda spooky, till you git used to it. She could be in pain, or even dyin', an' she couldn't make even a squeak, to tell you. It makes her sorta pathetic, spite of her size!

"Here she comes, now." He had opened the half-doors, and was tugging on a rope that disappeared into the depths. "Easy, now, sweetheart. Slow-w-w—"

He was blotted out. A great spotted hindleg appeared in front of his small bulk, hiding him completely. It was an enormous, an impossible leg—taller than a man and half as wide, ending in a splayed hoof larger than the largest Percheron horse's. It groped backward down the runway; then a second leg, of equal size, followed it; and a grotesque, spotted rump, dangling a yard-long tufted tail. Then a curiously foreshortened body that sloped steeply upward, and a pair of front legs taller by a half than the hind ones, and maned shoulders that actually brushed the lintel of the twelve-foot doorway.

For a moment the apparition balanced there, seemingly headless. Then it started to back again, unfurling what seemed endless yards of spotted neck. Finally a grotesquely small head appeared and shot aloft almost into the dome of the tent overhead. A weird triangular head that wore a halter like a horse, that had great melancholy eyes, cowlike ears, a sloping forehead adorned with three small, skin-covered horns, and pendulous lips that flapped loosely.

The monster stood there, blinking down at them blandly. Then, as old Ben Taylor let go the halter-rope, it swung and began to circle the enclosure. It moved with a strange, lolloping gait, fantastically light for its size, its hoofs seeming actually not to touch the earth. Around and around it went, neck undulating, and body bumping against the wire sides. The corral shook, as if from an earthquake.

"Good Lord! She's trying to bust out!" the driver yelled anxiously. "I told you she would. Get some help! That thing won't hold her for a minute, if she hits it square—"

But old Ben only lounged against the wagon-end, watching the antics with fond amusement. "Aw, now," he drawled. "She's just stretchin' her laigs a bit. She does that every mornin', soon's I let her out. She gits cramped up, in the wagon; she's gotta unlimber. She'll quiet down in a minute, soon's she sees the hay. There! She's goin' over to it now."

SURE enough, the creature had halted in mid-stride, ambled quietly over to the little basket, and started to munch its contents with relish.

"See! She's all settled now. She'll be peaceful enough, fer the rest o' the day, less'n somethin' scares her. Then she'll lope around some more. But it don't mean nothin'. It's just her way."

But the driver was staring at a new marvel. "My Lord, look at her tongue! Why, it looks more like a snake. It must be two feet long!"

The old man nodded, boredly. "Longest tongue in the animal kingdom. An' it's what they call prehensile. She kin grip with it, like a elephant's trunk. An' it's sticky, got a sorta glue on it. That tongue's a whole kit o' tools!"

The young man ground out his cigarette. "Well, she's certainly a sight, Grandpa! Glad I stuck around. Never saw one that big before. But what's them bandages on her neck?" The beast's neck was wound with cloths, for at least halfway up. "Don't tell me she's got a sore throat! That would be something—a giraffe with a sore throat! Haw-haw-haw!"

The old man scowled. "What's so dern funny about it?" he growled indignantly. "Giraffes *do* git sore throats; they git 'em all the time. An' 'tain't no joke when they do, neither—even if fools do laugh at it. How'd *you* like to have a sore throat ten feet long?"

The youth scratched his head. "I wouldn't!" he said with feeling. "You're right; it sure wouldn't be funny. I didn't know they really had them. I thought that was just a joke."

"Yeah, people is always makin' fool jokes about giraffes!" the ancient grumbled. "Like that one about the rube that sees one, an' says: 'They ain't no such animal!' Now what's funny about that, either, I ask you? He was lookin' at the critter, war'n't he? How could he think it didn't exist?"

The driver hid a grin behind his hand. "Guess you got a point, there," he said.

"You bet I have. There ain't nothin' funny, 'bout giraffes! People jest don't understand 'em. They're wonderful critters, when you git to know 'em. They're big; they're strong; they're—well, mebbe they ain't beautiful, but they're flashy. An' they're a lot smarter'n they're given credit fer. They can be trained. Ringlin's had one a couple o' years ago, that walked in the spectacle. An' a feller name o' Cotten, in the San Francisco zoo, taught one to let him ride on its back. I bet I could teach Lulubelle tricks, even perform her in the ring, if they'd only let me—"

"Well, we won't let you!" a voice said nearby. "She's much too valuable!"

Both turned. A man was standing on the other side of the corral, smiling at them—a well-dressed man, leaning on a gold-banded cane and smoking a cigar, with an air of authority. Old Ben beamed at him. "Howdy, Mr. George. Didn't see you come up, sir." But the driver stared in horror. "Jees! The boss!" he muttered. "An' me standin' here gabbin'." Suddenly aware of remissness in duty, he leaped into his machine, yanked levers wildly, and rolled out to resume his work, with never a backward glance. The two men grinned, as they watched him go.

BUT old Ben continued to lean against the wagon. No mere circus owner could disturb him! Having

*Ordinary animal escapes were routine; but this was a beast fresh from the wild, a very different proposition.*

worked with George Paterson's father and grandfather before him, he tended to regard the former, in his late forties, as just a well-meaning youngster, who might amount to something if he settled down.

"Payin' us your daily visit, eh, Mr. George?" he said casually.

"Of course. Don't think I'd miss checking up on my most valuable property, do you?" Paterson came closer, stood looking up at the great beast. He snapped his fingers at her, but she ignored him, continuing to eat, and switch her preposterous tail. . . .

"Yes, she's far and away the costliest animal the show owns," he went on. "That's why your idea of trying to train her is out, Ben. I don't say you couldn't do it; maybe you could —I don't know. But a ten-thousand-dollar turn would be too much to risk, just for a novelty. Suppose she hurt herself? No, I think we'll just leave her as a menagerie exhibit. All I ask is that you keep her healthy. She hasn't really got a sore throat, has she?" he added, pointing to the bandages.

"Naw! I wrap up her neck like thet every wet night, just so's she won't git one. An' it was rainin' last night, an' chilly. I put her back in the wagon, ahead o' time; last show crowd didn't git to see her at all. The menagerie superintendent was squawkin', but I didn't pay him no heed. You said I was in sole charge."

"That's right; you are. You do what you think's best for her, at all times. Her health comes first. Never mind the crowd. Or even the superintendent; it's not *his* money that'll be lost, if anything happens to her. Use your own judgment; I know it's good."

The old man nodded gravely. "Don't worry, sir. You can count on me always doin' what's best fer Lulubelle. It's a labor o' love, with me!"

"I know it is," the owner told him. "And I'm darned lucky to have you. Ordinary animal men are a dime a dozen; but a good giraffe man is a rarity. Don't suppose there are more than a dozen of 'em in the country."

"Not thet many." Old Ben shook his head. "I don't know of no more'n four—countin' me!"

"Well, as I say, I'm fortunate to have you. Only, I wish you'd let me hire an assistant for you. It'd make things a lot easier."

The old man bristled instantly. "An assistant? What for? Ain't I doin' the work all right? Been doin' it for the last ten years. I don't want no jackanapes fussin' round. And Lulubelle don't, neither. We make out all right, she an' I."

"But good Lord! It's practically a twenty-four-hour job," the other argued. "You're with her all the time, from when she's unloaded until she's back on the cars at night. You never have a moment to yourself. If you had a helper, he could at least spell you, so you could take time off now and then."

The old man snorted. "Time off? What'd I do with it, at my age? Run around with women?" He cackled toothlessly. "No sirree, Mr. George. Don't you worry 'bout me. Truth is, when a feller gits to my time o' life, he's lucky to have somethin' to keep him occupied. Thet's why all the best giraffe men is old codgers. Old Andrew, on the Ringlin' show, was the best of 'em; an' he was in his eighties! Young squirts got other things of their minds; they ain't reliable. But Lulubelle's the only thing on earth I'm interested in. I don't want no time away from her."

Paterson shrugged. "Well, it's up to you," he said. "If you're satisfied, that's all that matters. But I only hope the beast reciprocates your devotion to her."

Old Ben rubbed his chin. "Well, as to thet, sir," he said, slowly, "I don't think she notices me much, one way or t'other. Longnecks just ain't thet kind o' critters. They ain't pets! They're so much bigger'n human bein's, I don't think they distinguish between us, much. I guess we must look sorta like ants, to them—all alike, an' insignificant. I like Lulubelle, o' course; I'm crazy 'bout her. But whether she likes me, or not—well, I honestly don't know, even after all these years. They ain't what you'd call affectionate. Seems like they kinda *outgrowed* their emotions, 'way up there. I never knowed one thet showed any real fondness, fer a man.

"Lulubelle comes closer to it than most. She lets me work round her, and take care o' her; she's keerful not to kick me, or step on me. I kin doctor her, wrop her neck up, even lead her around on her halter-rope, like a hoss. That's a lot, for a giraffe. Most o' those I've handled, I couldn't even go in the corral with, 'thout a stick handy! An' they say she's restless, if I'm away from her for long. But that's as far as it goes; rest o' the feelin' is all on my side! No good giraffe man expects affection.

Jest bein' round 'em, is enough. Once you've worked with 'em, all other animals seem insignificant, an' uninterestin'! Think how the world'd look, ef you was eighteen feet tall! I cain't be, myself; but at least I can be around somethin' that is. It sorta takes a man out of himself; it's good for him!"

The owner looked at him. "H'm, yes. I can see how it might be, at that. I didn't know you were a philosopher, Ben!"

"I ain't! I'm jest a giraffe man! We all figger it that way; that's what keeps us doin' it."

"Well, I won't detain you any longer." Paterson turned. "Know you've got a lot to do, getting her ready for the matinee. We open in about an hour." He started to walk on, then hesitated. "By the way, those new leopards across the way aren't bothering her, are they?"

"Leopards?" Old Ben rubbed his chin. "Naw, sir. She ain't even noticed 'em, fur's I know."

"We just got them in yesterday," Paterson said. "They're fresh from the jungle. I thought they might frighten her, being right opposite—"

"She don't pay attention to the cats," the old man assured him. "She knows they're in cages, an' can't hurt her. Even when the lions roar, she don't notice. None o' the animals bother her, in fact, less'n they git too close to her corral."

"Well, if they worry her, you can have the cage moved down to the other end of the tent. Tell the superintendent I said so. We can't have her disturbed, under any circumstances." He waved a friendly hand, and strolled on.

Left alone, old Ben got to work in earnest. He drove stakes and guyed up the corral, spread straw bedding in it, and arranged it for exhibition. He removed the bandages from the beast's neck, unsnapped the rope from her halter. He pared and polished her hoofs and groomed her with a long-handled brush, while she stood placidly for these attentions. He unloaded various articles from the wagon, then closed it up and made things shipshape. He even washed the mud from its wheels and bed, with a bucket of water brought from the water truck outside, and he hung another bucketful on the grating, where Lulubelle could reach it if she were thirsty. By this time, the flag was up on the cookhouse, and he hurried over to snatch a hasty lunch.

When he came back, picking his teeth, the circus band was blaring and thumping in the big top, barkers were bawling out on the midway, and the crowd was gathering before the marquee. He had barely time to put on his gaudy blue-and-gold uniform and take up position beside the corral, before there was a call of "Doo-o-o-rs!" and the menagerie was open for the matinee. For the next hour he was on duty continually, with not a minute to himself.

By virtue of his age, he had a comfortable folding canvas chair, in which he was supposed to sit while the patrons filed through the display. Actually, he never used it for a moment. The giraffe corral was the center of attention, from the beginning; the beast dominated the entire tent, taller than the largest elephant, and stranger than any cage animal. Men, women and children flocked to gape at her, and there was a crowd around her pen continually; while she hung her long neck over the wires and gazed down at them, or ambled about, waggling her small head. She was the belle of the menagerie, and obviously enjoyed the attention she got. Old Ben was kept busy answering questions about her, trying to keep the crowd from thrusting hands through the grating, and above all, from trying to feed her!

Despite large signs, Do Not Feed the Giraffe, hung on the wagon and corral, and her keeper's constant vocal appeals, there was simply no way of stopping a circus crowd from trying to feed the animals—there never is, even where an alien diet is extremely dangerous. So, despite his constant vigilance, an occasional offering did get through. And Lulubelle bending her neck and spreading her forelegs in a gigantic inverted V, would pick it up with her adhesive tongue, and munch it with relish. She ingested peanuts, popcorn, candy and other items that would unquestionably have poisoned her, in the wild state. But all circus animals develop cast-iron stomachs, from necessity; and it apparently did her no harm. Nevertheless the old man always breathed a sigh of relief when the crowd thinned out, and the whistle blew for the performance in the big top.

Today, however, it had been easier, for Lulubelle seemed to pay little attention to the food-offerings, and he was able to fish out most of them with a stick, before she got them. She was, indeed paying little attention to the crowd itself, after the first few minutes, but was continually staring over their heads at—yes, by cracky! It was at the cage of new leopards, all right! It was strange; she hadn't even noticed them when they'd arrived yesterday, but she was definitely watching them now. Even when wandering about, she kept turning her haltered head to the direction of their cage; and she stood for long moments staring at it, long cow-ears pricked alertly. It was most curious, for the cats certainly weren't doing anything, but were crouched in the darkest corners of their compartments, cowering in terror of the strange crowds and surroundings—in contrast to the regular beasts, who paced or dozed in casual indifference. All you could see of them was an occasional glint of eyes. Perhaps it was their scent, as Mr. George had suggested. Still, she didn't seem frightened, but just alert and watchful.

She seemed to forget it for a while during the performance; when the hay animals, gorgeous in blankets and spangles, were led across the tent for the Grand Entry, when the performing lions and tigers were herded through the chute to the steel arena, amid roars and snarls and bellows. Or when the elephant herd, wearing gaudy headdresses and with pretty ballet girls riding their necks, ambled, holding each other's tails, into the ring for their act, and came out again. Such things always fascinated her, and did today; she peered down at them, curiously; starting, or lolloping about when the beasts passed close to her. But always, her gaze kept straying back to that long white cage directly opposite.

It was perplexing. Old Ben began to wonder whether it wouldn't be wise to move the den, as the circus owner had suggested. Though there wasn't a chance of getting it done just now. The truck and tractor men were off duty, the elephant handlers busy bedding down their charges after their performance. And the show was nearly over, the crowd would soon be coming out again. Not even "Mr. George's" authorization would get a wagon moved at such a time, except in extreme emergency. And Ben couldn't claim it was that; she wasn't panicking, or anything that would be dangerous to her. It was just that she kept watching.

She was still at it when the show ended, and the patrons straggled out into the menagerie again. By this time, she had taken up a position at the far end of the corral, facing the wagon. She was "pointing" it, like a bird-dog; statue-still, save for an occasional stamp of hoof or waggle of horned head. She did not even look around, as the crowd passed. Nor were they, on their part, disposed to linger long before a beast that stood with its back turned, and paid no attention to them. They moved on, to other attractions. . . .

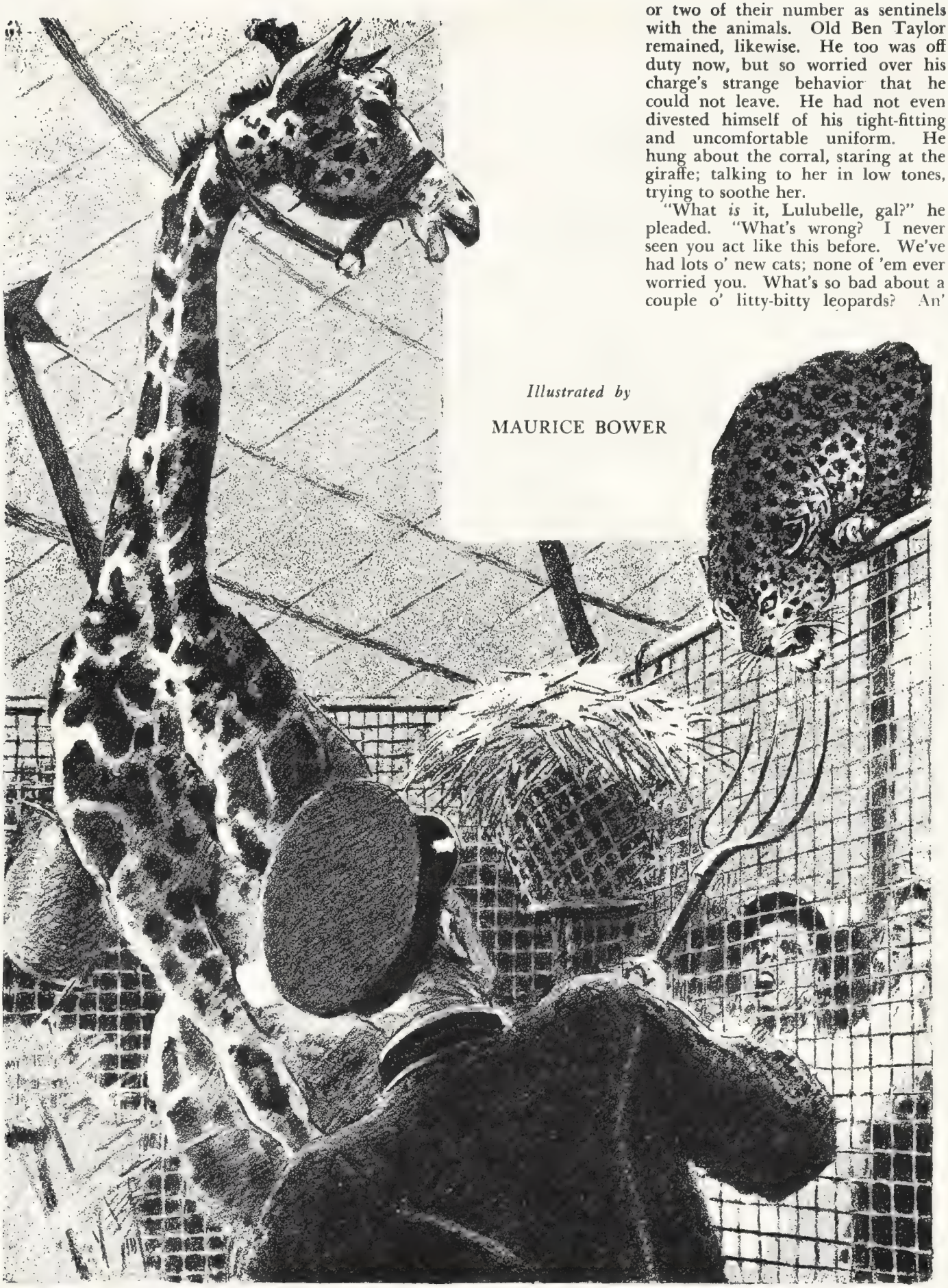
Gradually the tent emptied; by five o'clock, the last patron was out, and the menagerie closed until nightfall. The animal men, off duty, shed their gaudy regalia and departed; most of them headed for the cookhouse for their evening meal, leaving only one

or two of their number as sentinels with the animals. Old Ben Taylor remained, likewise. He too was off duty now, but so worried over his charge's strange behavior that he could not leave. He had not even divested himself of his tight-fitting and uncomfortable uniform. He hung about the corral, staring at the giraffe; talking to her in low tones, trying to soothe her.

"What *is* it, Lulubelle, gal?" he pleaded. "What's wrong? I never seen you act like this before. We've had lots o' new cats; none of 'em ever worried you. What's so bad about a couple o' litty-bitty leopards? An'

*Illustrated by*

MAURICE BOWER



*"You devil! Git down off'n there! You ain't gonna get her. You'll hafta kill me, fust!"*

anyway, they're caged up; they cain't hurt you. Cain't you forget 'em, an' calm down?"

But the beast ignored him completely, still standing stiff and tense. He opened the corral, walked in and put a hand on her flank, but still she did not move. He could feel her trembling even through the loose hide. She stood with feet wide and legs braced, neck stretched out on a line with her sloping body. Her little triangular head was lowered, with the futile horns pointing, like a goat about to butt. She kept raising her right forefoot, and stamping it sharply. Her eyes were glued on the leopards' cage.

For the hundredth time he tried to see what she was looking at, stared across at the vehicle. And then he gasped! That door—that little door in the rear! It was moving; it was slowly opening. And through it was gliding a yellow shape with burning eyes; it dropped without a sound to the sawdust, and stood staring about and lashing its tail.

Lord A'mighty! So that was it! The lock on that den must have been defective, and one of the cats had worked it open! Lulubelle had seen it, even at that distance; or sensed it, with one of those strange senses of hers. For hours she'd been trying to warn them about it, but no one had understood! And now it was too late; the brute was loose—loose in a whole tentful of helpless animals, with most of their guardians away!

Hurriedly, old Ben cupped his hands. "Hey! Loose cat! *Loose cat!*" he bawled, at the top of his lungs, to give the alarm. Then he snatched up a pitchfork from the straw and stationed himself beside Lulubelle, ready for any emergency. He wasn't particularly alarmed, of course. After all, there was a ten-foot wire fence surrounding them; it should be sufficient to discourage any feline—especially when the other herbivores were without any protection at all.

Most of them had spotted the escaped beast by now, and were reacting in their various fashions. The elephants, across the way, were squawking and twittering, tossing their trunks as they caught the scent. Camels were lurching up from their knees, and tugging at pickets. Zebras plunged and kicked, snorting wildly. Two llamas pulled up their stakes, and bounded about. The water buffalo was rumbling, and yaks and zebus lowered threatening horns toward the enemy. Even the lions and tigers had caught the contagion, and were roaring excitedly. The whole tent was pandemonium, that spread the alarm far more effectively than the shouts of the men.

And help arrived swiftly. Circus personnel were rushing up from all sides. But they were hesitating, clustering at the sidewalls, uncertain what to do. Ordinary animal escapes were routine; they knew just how to deal with them. But this was a beast fresh from the wild, a very different proposition. Some were shouting to break out the rifles from the ticket wagon. Others were unrolling capturing nets, and dragging in a shifting den, a heavy boxlike affair on poles. But minutes went by, and nothing happened.

"Hey, git a move on!" old Ben yelled at them. "You ain't got all day! Git movin', can't you!"

Instantly he regretted his words, for the sound of his voice attracted the big cat's wandering attention. The snarling face turned in their direction, the glaring eyes focused on the giraffe's towering bulk. Then, belly-flattened, tail lashing, the brute began to crawl toward the corral.

Old Ben waved his arms, brandished his pitchfork. "Hey, git away from here! Beat it! Scat!" he yelled. But even now he wasn't too much alarmed. There was still the ten-foot grating; it seemed impossible that the creature could get over it. But then, too late, he recalled that leopards are much greater leapers than lions or tigers! The spotted terror didn't even hesitate at the barrier. It just seemed to rise, and float through the air. A second more, and it was atop the frail structure, balancing, preparing to leap down.

The giraffe reared, and backed wildly. The old man flung himself in front of her. "Don't worry, Lulubelle. I'll pertect you!" he gasped. He jabbed futilely with the fork at the snarling, menacing mask that glared down. "Oh, you devil! Git down off'n there! You ain't gonna git her, I tell you. You'll hafta kill me, fust—"

And then the brute leaped. Ben saw it coming, tried to fling up the fork, but his old arms gave out. It struck his shoulder, smashing him down to earth. He smelled the reek of its breath, saw the gaping fangs looming above his face.

"Lulubelle!" was his last conscious thought. Then blackness. . . .

"Ben—old Ben! Are you all right?" He came back to consciousness slowly. He was lying outside the corral on the sawdust, a cluster of animal men surrounding him anxiously, chafing his wrists and shaking him gently. The menagerie superintendent was fanning him with his cap; and Mr. George was bending over him with a worried look.

"Sure, I'm all right." He thrust them all aside peevishly and tried to sit up. "Just knocked out, I reckon. 'Twasn't me, the thing was after. It went right over me. Though I might's well be daid, at that!" he added, dully. "Lulubelle's gone; it got her, spite o' all I could do. I—"

"Lulubelle? What are you talking about?" George Paterson demanded. He pointed upward. The head of the giraffe, like some strange moon, was hanging over the corral, peering down at them with anxiety. She was completely unharmed.

"Lulubelle!" The old man staggered to his feet joyfully, reeled toward the grating, thrusting his hands through it. "You ain't daid? You're safe? Why, it's a miracle!"

"Oh, no! It's no miracle!" Mr. George chuckled. "Look there!"

The giraffe had whirled, and stalked over to a corner. She was pounding, with a forefoot, a limp bundle in the straw.

"You'll have to get that out for us, Ben, soon's you're able," the owner told him. "She won't let any of the rest of us go inside. She's still excited. There's hardly enough of it left to bury!"

Old Ben clung to the wires. "You—you mean she kilt him, herself?" he got out. "It don't seem possible."

"Oh, it's possible, all right!" Paterson assured. "Inevitable, would be more the word! The brute never had a chance. Trouble is, she won't believe he's dead. She keeps stamping him, just to make sure!

"You see, Ben," he went on, "the trouble with you is, you've been wet-nursing that animal of yours for so long, you've got it in your mind that she's hopelessly delicate. And she *is* delicate, in some ways; no doubt about that. For drafts, and germs, and so on. But not when it comes to fighting. My God, no! Giraffes are the deadliest fighters in the whole animal kingdom. There's nothing in Africa that can stand up to them. They've been known to smash in a full-grown lion's skull, with one kick. And they can kick both ways, front and back! If that leopard hadn't been completely crazy, it'd never have dared go in there. You should have seen her, when it jumped you! There was just a sort of blur in the air—and that was that! You've saved her life, a lot of times, Ben. But it looks like, this time, *she* saved *yours!*"

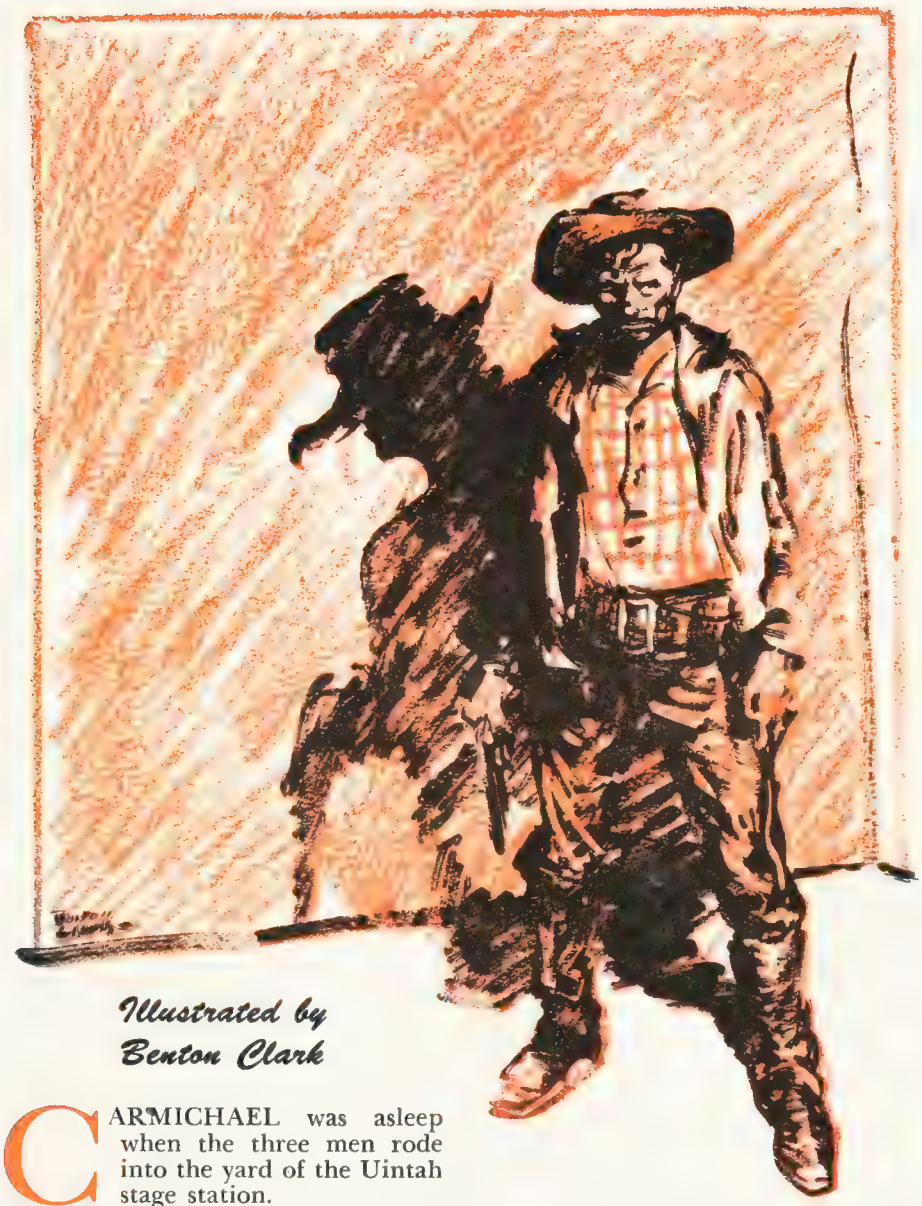
"Well, I'll be darned!" The old man stared up at her, raptly. "Lulubelle! You saved me! Why—why, I guess you *do* like me, after all."

But the giraffe only stared at him, dumbly. Forever locked in her strange prison of great height and silence, she had no way of showing her emotions. She could only look down at him, with her great soulful eyes.

# Three Men Rode In

HE'D COME WEST FOR HIS HEALTH, AND TOOK A JOB AT THE STAGE STATION. THE THREE OUTLAWS DIDN'T EXPECT HIM TO MAKE ANY TROUBLE.

by PHILIP KETCHUM



*Illustrated by Benton Clark*

CARMICHAEL was asleep when the three men rode into the yard of the Uintah stage station.

Aroused by their voices, he sat up on the edge of his bed, feeling logy as he always did when awaking from his afternoon nap, and wondering if the stage from Ajo had arrived early or if Juan had allowed him to oversleep. Juan had instructions to see that he was up at least an hour before the stage was due, but then Mamá Ana might have countermanded those orders. Mamá Ana was always wanting him to get more rest.

It was hot in this sleeping-room. Hot in spite of the thick adobe walls. Carmichael's thin body was sticky with perspiration. He was tired, too, muscle-weary, but this weariness he knew would pass after he had moved around a bit. And his afternoon nap would have given him enough strength to see him through the rest of the day. In this hot and dry country, Carmichael was firmly convinced, he was doing more than holding his own. He was stronger than when he had come here three months before. Not much stronger, but enough to sense the change. And he should have been dead; the doctors in the East had given him less than three months to live. . . .

A sudden fit of coughing seized him and held him for a moment in its merciless grip. When it was over and as he still sat there, huddled on the edge of his bed, he heard the door open. Glancing up, he saw Juan Otero's stooped figure.

"Señor," said Juan, and his voice sounded deeply troubled. "Señor, there are three men who have ridden here. They wish to see you. They wish—"

Someone thrust Juan Otero out of the way and stepped into the room. A big man, tall, broad-shouldered—a man with a black, bushy beard, a ruddy, flushed face, and dark, deep-set eyes—a man whose shirt was sweat-plastered to his body and who carried a gun in his hand. He glanced around the room, then stared at Carmichael, scowling.

"So you're the lunger," he said harshly.

"I suppose people call me that," Carmichael admitted.

He was fully awake now, and awake to a sense of danger. It gripped him just as the coughing had a moment before, quickening his breath and making him aware of the sharp pounding of his heart.

"Where's your gun?" asked the bearded man.

Carmichael's mind was suddenly working with lightning speed. He didn't know who this man was or why he was here. He didn't know, accurately, what danger he faced; but in the three months he had been here he had heard enough to have some measure of the violence of this country, and to have sensed the temper of the men who lived in it. He had a rifle and a six-gun similar to the one the man was carrying. He decided, abruptly, to admit only the possession of the rifle.

"Well?" the bearded man asked.

"My rifle is in the main room of the station," said Carmichael.

"And your six-gun?"

"I have no six-gun."

The bearded man stepped forward—stepped forward swiftly. The gun in his hand slapped across Carmichael's face, and the blow was so sudden Carmichael had no chance to dodge it. The blow, sudden and hard, bowled Carmichael over. It brought tears stinging to his eyes, half blinding him. It started a stinging sound in his ears. He straightened. He started to stand up, but the man struck him again, and his knees folded and he sprawled to the floor.

Carmichael was only dimly conscious of what followed: The man stood over him for a moment, kicking him. He knew that. And the man kept shouting at him, asking him where his gun was. He remembered that. And finally the man hauled him up and rolled him across the bed and stepped back.

"Lie to me, will you," Carmichael heard him saying. "You've got just one more chance to talk. Where is your gun?"

THERE was no strength left in Carmichael to fight back. There had been little to begin with. He lay motionless, gasping for breath and feeling a cough building up, a cough which he was afraid might bring with it a sudden gush of blood. For weeks, now, he hadn't hemorrhaged. He had hoped he never would again, but after what had just happened, he might.

"We've rounded up the others," called a voice from the door. "The woman, her daughter, and a kid of about sixteen. They're in the dining-room. The old man too. George is watching them."

"Get me a bucket of water, Yates," said the bearded man.

"Sure, Hawley," came the answer.

Carmichael was trying to breathe easier, hoping to avoid a straining cough. He put his mind on what he had heard, on the names he had heard. George, and Yates, and Hawley. Only one held any particular meaning for him. The name Hawley—the name of the bearded man. Ed Weller, one of the stage-drivers, had warned him against an outlaw named Bill Hawley. *"If he ever shows here,"* Ed had advised him, *"give him what he wants and play dumb. The man's a cold-blooded killer, gun-crazy. Don't buck him, Carmichael, unless you're in a hurry to die."*

***What lay ahead Carmichael could see, up to a point where the shooting might start.***

The side of his face was beginning to swell. Carmichael could sense that. There was a hammering pain in his head, but that wasn't important. All that was important was not coughing. All that was important was lying here quietly until his breathing was steady again.

"Here's the water," said Yates from the doorway.

"Throw it on the lunger," ordered Hawley.

Carmichael started to sit up. He lifted himself just in time to catch the full force of the water aimed at his head, and the shock of it drove all the wind from his body. And he started coughing again, twisting around and sitting up and holding his head with both hands. But for some strange reason, it wasn't bad. Not nearly as bad as he had feared. It shook him as always, and left him weak and trembling, but there was no hemorrhage.

"All right now," said Hawley suddenly, moving forward. "You can tell me where your gun is, or we'll start all over."

CARMICHAEL looked up at him, looked up into Hawley's still flushed and scowling face. And he knew there was nothing to do but tell where his gun could be found. He couldn't take more of what had happened. He couldn't take more and live.

"Where is it?" said Hawley. "I know you've got one. We know everything about this station."

"Look in the table drawer," said Carmichael.

The bearded man laughed. He turned, crossed the room, pulled open the table drawer and took out the gun he found there. After briefly examining it, he tucked it in his belt.

"Come on," he ordered then, glancing at Carmichael. "We'll have a talk in the dining-room with the others."

Carmichael shook his head. "Give me a minute. A minute to rest up."

Hawley stiffened. "I'll give you nothing. Get started. Get started if you have to crawl."

And he meant that. Carmichael could read it in his face, in his attitude. Here was a man who would let no one stand in his way, or no set of circumstances balk him. Here was a man who lived always on the edge of violence.

"I'll not crawl," Carmichael heard himself saying. And he was a little surprised at those words, for he hadn't known he meant to say them. "I'll not crawl. I'll get there."

He stood up and for a moment, rocked unsteadily from side to side. A tall man, thin, and deeply tanned from the sunbaths Mamá Ana had insisted on. A man in the early thirties,

ROSITA

but whose deep wrinkled face made him seem much older. A man who by medical standards should have been dead but was still clinging precariously to life. He took a step toward the door and then another and another. He reached it and moved outside.

They were all in the dining-room. Juan and Mamá Ana, Pedro and Rosita. Juan, a small and stooped man who was a wizard with horses. Mamá Ana, his wife, short and fat, an ample-breasted woman whose energy was amazing, and who had mothered him since he had arrived here. Rosita, sixteen, and darkly beautiful and lazy. And Pedro, a year or so older, a thin, silent lad who helped his father in the stables. Juan, Mamá Ana, Rosita and Pedro Otero, who with a lunger, handled this stage station. He was the extra baggage, and Carmichael knew it. Even what Knowland had told him didn't change that. *"We like to have a white man at each of our stations,"* Knowland said. *"It looks better for the stage line."* And maybe it did; but this Otero family, in spite of a dusky skin, was as white as a family could be.

They were all in the dining-room when he came in, and they looked at him, Mamá Ana anxiously, Juan's somber face showing nothing, Pedro frowning, and Rosita wide-eyed and excited. They all looked at him, and Mamá Ana started forward, but stopped as Carmichael shook his head. Beyond them was a thin, dark-faced man who Carmichael guessed was George. A man of about twenty-five, sharp-eyed and watchful, and perspiring in this late afternoon heat.

"No one else around here, huh?" asked Hawley, who had followed Carmichael into the room.

"No one else," said George. "Just these four, and the lunger."

"You looked through the other rooms?"

"Yeah. No one else."

Carmichael sat down on the bench at the long table in the room. He still felt shaky, but his mind was working again, working clearly in spite of the way his head ached. He glanced at those who were stationed here with him. His people. People he was responsible for. He managed a smile when looking at Mamá Ana.

YATES came in—Yates, who was bigger than Hawley, who was fat and whose beard was red and who might have been forty.

"I put our horses in the barn," he reported. "I tied them there. I left them saddled."

Hawley nodded. He looked at Carmichael. "Where's the rifle?"

"Under the bar," said Carmichael.

Hawley walked that way. He found the rifle, unloaded it, and set it in the corner; then leaning on the bar, he faced those in the room.

"In about an hour," he said slowly, "the stage from Ajo will pull in here for a change of horses. When it does, you people will act the way you always do. The women will stay inside—in here. You two men," he indicated Juan and Pedro—"will be outside to unhitch the horses from the stage. The lunger will walk out to speak to the driver, the guard and the passengers. And if anyone, anyone at all, gives any warning that we're here, he'll die suddenly. Very suddenly."

Hawley drew his gun. He looked down at it, smiling—then looked up. And suddenly the gun exploded, and a bullet screamed inches above Mamá Ana's head.

But Mamá Ana didn't budge. Carmichael could see perspiration glistening on her face. She stood rigid, her breath coming fast. And Juan, who had taken a step forward, stopped abruptly as Hawley's gun swung toward him.

"It would be too bad," said Hawley, chuckling, "if anything happened to her, or if anything happened to the girl. It would be too bad, wouldn't it?"

No one said a thing.

"Well, answer me," screamed Hawley, showing an abrupt flash of anger. "It would be too bad, wouldn't it?"

*"Si, señor,"* said Juan Otero, his voice very low. *"Si, señor.* It would be too bad."

"That's better," said Hawley, nodding. "All right, get out to the stable, you and your son. And be ready when the stage comes. Be ready, not

*"The man's a cold-blooded killer, gun-crazy," Ed Weller had warned.*

to change the horses, but to unhitch those on the stage. And if there is any warning, the women will not live. Remember that. The women will not live."

Juan bit his lips. He glanced at Mamá Ana, at Rosita, then turned and shuffled toward the door, his shoulders sagging. And Pedro followed him—Pedro, rigidly erect and with his hands clenched, and his thin face tight with anger.

CARMICHAEL, alone now with the three outlaws and the two women, sat quietly on the bench at the table—sat as a man might sit who was dazed at what had happened, or perhaps as a man might sit who was lost in thought. And the latter was true. He could see, now, just what was ahead. In less than an hour the stage from Ajo would pull into the yard—and to the driver and the guard, and to the passengers, everything at the Uintah station would seem in order. Juan and Pedro would be out there waiting to take charge of the horses. The women would be inside the station, presumably preparing the lunch which was always served at this stop. And he would walk out to greet those who had arrived, just as he always did.

Here, and in a normal setting, the guard would not be alert for trouble. The driver and the other men who might be on the stage, even though armed, would be expecting only a moment of rest from the tiring trip to Tucson. Hawley, Yates and George, with any luck at all, could pull off a perfect hold-up. And what they stood to gain might well be worth the risk. The mines at Ajo were rich. The stage often carried a valuable cargo of bullion.

This was what lay ahead, and Carmichael could see it just as it would happen. Could see it up to a point—the point where the shooting might start. Ed Weller would probably be driving today's stage from Ajo with Rocky Sims riding as guard. Ed Weller and Rocky, both proud and quick-tempered men—men who might take a chance.

The three outlaws had crossed to the west window and were standing there, staring out across the rolling desert country toward Ajo. Now and then Hawley turned to look at Carmichael and the two women. And George kept looking around, but only at Rosita, and grinning as he studied her. George, Carmichael decided, was beginning to have ideas about Rosita.

Hawley swung suddenly away from the window. He crossed to the bar and looked on the shelf below the counter. Then he straightened up. "Where's the cash-box?" he asked Carmichael. "There's a cash-box here when the stage is in."

"It's in my room," said Carmichael.

"Get it and bring it here," said Hawley. "And don't empty it on the way. Yates, go with him."

Carmichael got to his feet. He turned toward the door. *"If Hawley ever shows here, give him what he wants and play dumb,"* Ed Weller had said. *"Don't buck him."* And that was the thing to do, of course. It was all he could do, but it was not the end of his responsibility. It was not his part to let the Ajo stage roll into a trap.

Carmichael stepped through the door and into the stage station's sun-baked yard. He turned along the building toward his room, and Yates followed him—Yates, who was so fat he almost waddled.

He entered his room with Yates close behind him, and he crossed to the chest-high tier of boxes which Mamá Ana had covered with a curtain. Here he kept his clothing and the few personal possessions he had brought with him. Here was the cash-box with the stage station's money; and here also was a tin box holding the money that was his. Not a great sum, but still money. And on top of this commode was a heavy, glass-bottomed lamp. Carmichael stared at it and could suddenly feel the drive of a mounting excitement.

"WELL, come on. Get the cash-box," growled Yates, who had moved half across the room.

Carmichael moistened his lips. He reached into one of the sections, half pulled out some clothing, and succeeded in knocking a tin box to the floor, the box holding his money. It came open, and a roll of bills and some loose change spilled out.

"You clumsy fool," said Yates. "Pick it up."

"That's not the cash-box," said Carmichael. "That's mine."

"You mean it used to be yours," said Yates, grinning.

He moved forward and stooped over to pick up the roll of bills, and

Carmichael lifted the lamp. He lifted it and brought it down on Yates' head—brought it down with all the force he could muster. A startled cry broke from Yates' throat. It was short, and was quickly choked off; then Yates sprawled unconscious on the floor at Carmichael's feet, the shattered fragments of the lamp scattered around him.

Carmichael felt a shock of surprise at what had happened—a shock of surprise, followed immediately by the icy-cold grip of fear. What he had done had been done on impulse, with no thought as to what it might lead to, or what it must lead to. For this was no accident. And it couldn't be made to look like an accident, couldn't be covered up. What he had done had committed him definitely to a course from which he could not turn back, and from which he couldn't run away. And he could see the swift and violent end, ahead.

ALMOST twenty years before, Carmichael's family had moved, and he had been entered in a new school. He had been tall for his age—tall, thin and sickly even then. And a boy named Alfred—he would never forget Alfred—had dared him to fight him, that first day. Alfred, who was shorter, stockier, tough. Carmichael remembered the fight, forced on him by others who crowded around. He remembered how he had broken away and run home. And he would never forget the miserable week which followed, when he had been afraid to leave the house by the front door, but had sneaked out the back way. Eventually, Alfred had tired of bullying him, but the fear, planted deep within him that far back, had never been fully wiped out.

And it was there now, strong, and insistent, and gripping every bit of his attention. Hardly aware of what he was doing, Carmichael bound Yates' legs and arms with strips of clothing, then took the man's gun and shoved his body under the bunk. He kicked most of the glass from the lamp out of sight, and after this, crossed to the door. Standing there, he could see to the stable, and in the open door of the stable could make out the figures of Juan and Pedro, looking toward the station. And the sight of the stooped Mexican and his son reminded him of Mamá Ana, and Rosita. And of what he had to do. For he couldn't stay here. He couldn't hide and let the two women suffer for what he had done. There was only one course open to him. He had to walk back into the dining-room. He had to play out this game he had started.

He looked at the gun he was carrying, Yates' gun. He opened his shirt and tucked it under his belt. Hidden by the shirt, it still bulged there, but doubled over, coughing, or recovering from a cough, he might be able to hide it for a time with his hand and arm. He would have to risk it. And for once in his life, he could be thankful for his cough.

This, in a way, was amusing, and it brought a wry smile to Carmichael's lips. He stepped outside, moved toward the dining-room, and near the door paused long enough to imitate the dry, racking cough which sometimes seized him. After this, he pushed open the door, and half doubled over, staggered to the bench where he had been seated before, and dropped there, both arms wrapped over his stomach. And over the gun.

Hawley had been talking to George when he came in, and now there was a moment of silence, then Hawley asked abruptly, "Where's Yates?"

Carmichael shook his head. He didn't glance up.

"I said, where's Yates?" Hawley thundered.

"He said he was going to look around in the other rooms and see what he could pick up," Carmichael answered. "He told me to come back here."

Hawley moved suddenly toward him, but Carmichael still didn't look up. He heard the man pass him and stop in the open door.

"Hey, Yates!" Hawley shouted. "Yates, where are you?"

There was no answer.

Hawley shouted the man's name again, listened, then jerked around to face Carmichael. "Where's the cash-box?" he demanded.

"Yates has it," said Carmichael.

Hawley swore, then called: "George, keep your eye on the lunger. I'm going to find Yates. The stage might get here early."

"I'll watch him," said George.

FOR a moment after Hawley left there wasn't a sound in the room. Carmichael looked up. He saw Mamá Ana and Rosita standing close together near the bar. He saw George at the window—George, who was thin and dark-faced and young. George, who wasn't looking at him, but at Rosita; George, who was grinning, and who now moved suddenly closer to Rosita and reached out to touch her dark hair. *"Chiquita,"* he whispered. *"Chiquita mía."*

The girl jerked away. George laughed. He reached out again but Mamá Ana moved suddenly between them.

"Leave her alone," screamed Mamá Ana. "Leave her alone, *puerco!* Pig!"

Carmichael had straightened. He reached under his shirt. He grasped the gun. He saw George, in a sudden anger, thrust Mamá Ana out of the way, and he came to his feet. And George, glancing at him, saw the gun in his hand—saw it and stiffened, and clawed desperately at his holster.

Carmichael fired. He fired the gun and felt its powerful kick. He lowered the barrel and fired it again and then fired a third time at the figure reeling toward him. A figure which collapsed, and fell to the floor, and lay there motionless.

This would do it, of course. These shots would do it. They would bring Hawley running to the door, and Carmichael turned that way. He heard Hawley's pounding footsteps. He heard them stop just outside the doorway, and before Hawley came into sight, and then he heard Hawley's voice—high, excited, betraying the strain the man was under.

"George!" Hawley shouted. "What's happening in there, George?"

"Come in and find out," Carmichael screamed. "Come in and find out."

He stood facing the door, covering the doorway with his gun. And he was shaking—shaking so much he couldn't hold the gun steady. His breath was coming fast. He stood facing the door and waiting, but nothing happened. Hawley didn't appear and didn't speak again.

From the side window, Mamá Ana was shouting to Juan and Pedro, telling them what had happened, but Carmichael was only vaguely aware of this. He tried to figure swiftly what Hawley would do, and only one sound possibility occurred to him. Certainly, with conditions as they were, and alone, Hawley wouldn't try to hold up the Ajo stage. It seemed much more likely that he would try to escape.

*"We had a little trouble here."*

Carmichael moved forward, toward the door. He stood against the wall, to one side; it was a thick adobe wall, through which a bullet couldn't penetrate. He steadied himself there, and he called: "Juan! Juan! Unsaddle the three horses the men left in the barn. Unbridle them. Drive them outside. Do you hear me?"

*"Si, señor,"* came the answer, and there was a lift in Juan's voice. "It shall be done."

CARMICHAEL moistened his lips. Hawley couldn't get away now. Hawley was trapped here. But the trap had a double edge. It was like locking yourself in with a lion—a black-bearded, cornered, desperate lion.

His glance circled the room. Mamá Ana and Rosita stood close against the kitchen wall, and as he looked that way, Rosita smiled. Rosita, who had never before had a smile for him, who had almost studiously avoided him. Her smile was quick, timid, but was a gesture of encouragement; and Mamá Ana's lips moved, forming a message: *"La cocina—la cocina!"*

*La cocina.* The kitchen. What did she mean? Carmichael's eyes jerked toward the open kitchen door. He listened intently but could hear nothing. He glanced again at Mamá Ana, and again read that message: *La cocina.*

Since that one shouted question from Hawley, he hadn't heard the man, and it occurred to him now that Hawley might have circled around to the kitchen and stepped inside. In another moment he might appear in the kitchen door. And then, all he would have to do was lift his gun and fire it. Carmichael knew he couldn't hope to match Hawley's use of a gun. Until three months ago he had never held a gun in his hand.

"I think he's gone, Mamá Ana," said Carmichael, his voice unnecessarily loud. "I'm going outside. I'll circle the building to the back door, the kitchen door. You wait here."

Mamá Ana was shaking her head—shaking her head desperately. She was trying to tell him that Hawley was in the kitchen, that she had heard him there. Carmichael was sure of that. He nodded to her, stooped over, pulled off his shoes, then moved soundlessly toward the door to the kitchen. His gun lifted ready, every muscle in his body feeling the tension of this moment.

He moved soundlessly toward the kitchen door and reached it. He took one more step forward and saw Hawley. Hawley, whose back was toward him—Hawley, who had heard what he had said to Mamá Ana. Hawley, who was playing it safe, who was watching the back door, waiting for him to appear.

Almost holding his breath now, Carmichael moved into the kitchen. In three quick steps he came up behind the man. His gun lifted, and whipped down with all the crushing force Carmichael could put into the blow. This was what Hawley had done to him, although Hawley had hit him across the side of the face and not so hard. This was what Hawley had done to him; and just as he had rolled over, so Hawley slumped to the floor, and lay there, not moving.

THE stage from Ajo pulled in almost on time. Juan and Pedro were waiting to change the horses. Inside the station, Mamá Ana had a lunch ready for the driver, the guard and the passengers. Rosita would help her serve it. And as had been his custom, Carmichael walked out into the yard to greet the driver and the guard and those passengers on their way from Ajo to Tucson.

"Hi, Carmy," shouted Ed Weller, the driver. "What's new at Uintah?"

This was a standard joke. Nothing was ever new at the Uintah station.

Weller climbed down over the wheel, followed by Rocky Sims, the guard. Weller was tall, thin, leathery-faced. He grinned at Carmichael, then scowled, noticing the swelling on Carmichael's face.

"Hey," he demanded. "What happened to you?"

## NIGHTMARE IN WOOL

*by* ROBERT H. REDDING

**NOVEMBER 8, 1832, marked the beginning of what was probably the longest sheep drive in North America, and the most tragic. On that day, William Glen Rae led ten men from Fort Garry, now Winnipeg, on an eighteen-hundred-mile expedition to St. Louis. Their object was to buy sheep for the Hudson's Bay Company of Canada.**

**From the start they were plagued by bad weather and mischance. Snow and high winds made trail conditions miserable. Poor grass forced them to leave spare horses at an American outpost, and at Fort Snelling they were bitterly disappointed to find that the last river boat had already gone, which meant horseback for the remainder of the journey.**

**On January 2, 1833, they finally arrived in St. Louis, only to learn there were no sheep available. It took months of trial and error before sheep were located in Kentucky. Even then it was another month before they had a sizable band—thirteen hundred and seventy all told—so that it was the middle of May before Rae could begin the long road back.**

**At first the party made good time; then on June 8, first signs of what was to come appeared. Several sheep were afflicted with spear grass. Had Rae known the meaning of spear grass he would have called a halt immediately, but neither he nor any of his men were experienced in such matters and they kept going—straight into the jaws of hell.**

**Spear grass is a malignant enemy of soft-skinned animals. The blades enter the flesh and penetrate up to four inches, causing sores laden with pus and, in this case, infested with maggots. The grass-wounds were in great volume, for William Glen Rae counted several hundred sores on just a single victim. The death-toll was terrific and by the middle of July there were only six hundred sheep left.**

**There was no turning back, nor would matters have been helped by stopping where they were, in the center of spear-grass country. The only thing possible was to push on, trying for free terrain ahead. Desperately the men tried to save their flock. They fought the nauseous smell of rotting flesh mixed with suffocating dust until it seemed they too would sicken and die. Day after disastrous day they applied tweezers and shears to the suffering animals, but despite their most valiant efforts the sheep continued to perish by scores.**

**ON September 16, 1833, after having traveled over thirty-six hundred miles in ten months, the Hudson's Bay men reëntered the gates of Fort Garry. There was no triumph in their bearing, there were no boasts. They wore the haggard faces of men who have been too long with death and pain. They were glad to be home where they could forget the pitiful bleating of the surviving sheep—all two hundred and ninety-five of them.**

"Nothing important," said Carmichael. "Get your coffee, then come to my room for a minute. I'll tell you about it."

He turned away to greet the passengers and to direct them to the dining-room, and if there was more assurance in his manner, he wasn't aware of it.

WELLER had coffee, then came to Carmichael's room, and at the sight of the three figures on the floor, caught his breath. He looked quickly at Carmichael, then back at the three men, two of whom were tightly bound.

"Bill Hawley, Sam Yates and George Ballard," he said under his breath. "What happened here, Carmy? What happened?"

"We had a little trouble," said Carmichael slowly. "I'm afraid George is dead. Maybe the sheriff in Tucson would like to send out for Hawley and Yates."

"I'll say he would," Weller nodded. "The sheriff wants 'em, and wants 'em bad."

Weller turned to the door. He called: "Hey, Rocky! Rocky, come here."

Rocky Sims showed up. He took one look at the three figures on the floor, and whistled.

"You don't have to worry about that bullion we're carrying any more," said Weller. "I don't know how Carmy did it. I still don't believe he did it. But there they are. Throw away your gun, Rocky. You're not in Carmy's class."

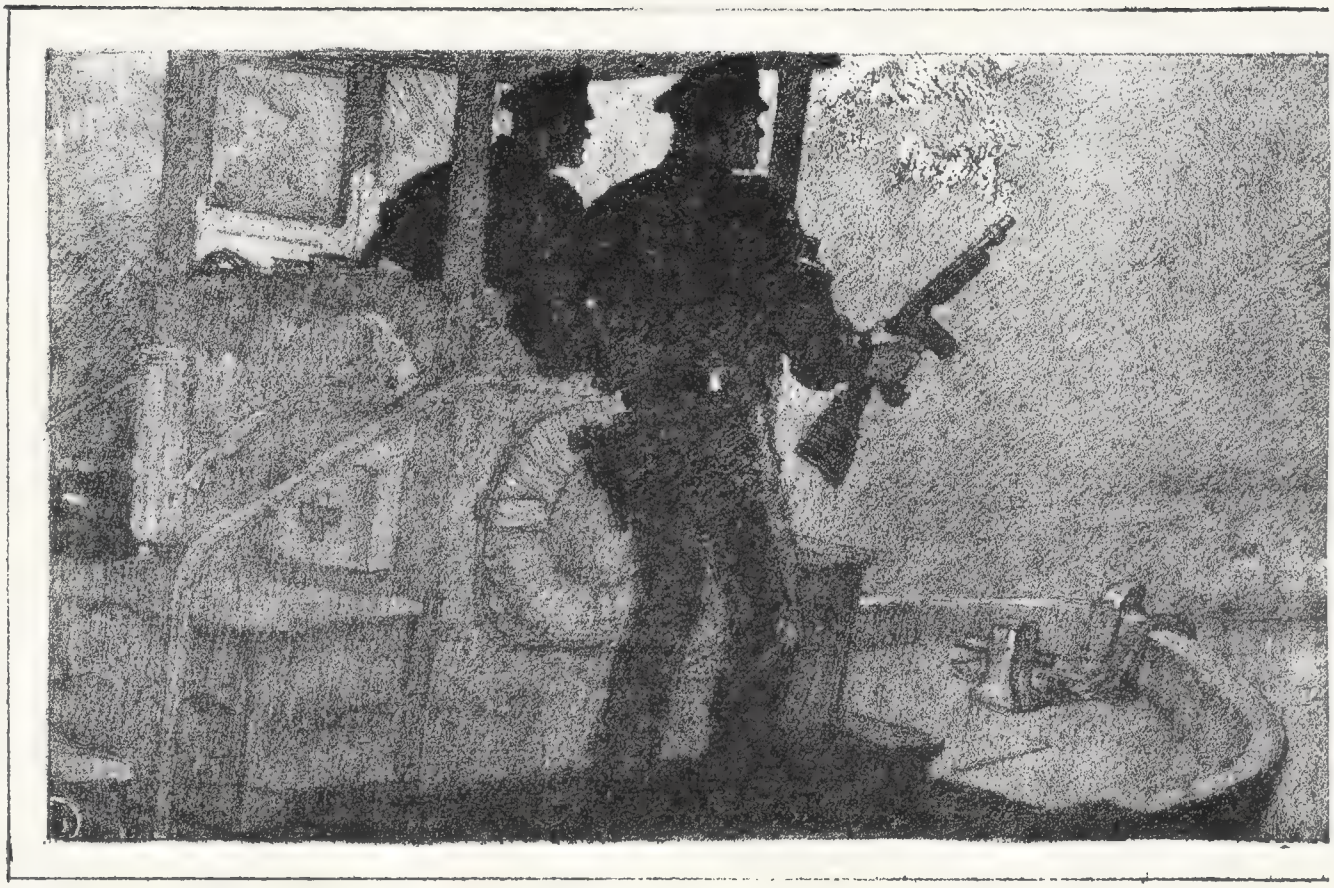
Carmichael was grinning. He felt suddenly very good. He felt as though he had gone far toward burying the ghost of a boy named Alfred whom he had known many years ago. A sudden fit of coughing seized him, and he turned away and leaned against the wall until it was over. Then he straightened, and once more managed a smile.

"You know, I'm going to whip this cough," he said, almost to himself. "I'm going to whip it."

He had never said that before, never said it aloud. And although he had told himself that, he had never believed it until right now. But now he was sure. The rest and the sun and this dry country and Mamá Ana's good food would do the trick. Those things, and his own determination.

"Tell us about it, Carmy," Weller was saying. "Tell us about it."

"Why, there's nothing much to tell," said Carmichael. "We had a little trouble here at Uintah station with three men who rode in. That's all. And if you're going to make it to Tucson on time, you'd better get started."



# The Weight of

THE tide was at the ebb; the breeze had died at sunset. In the afterglow the calm surface of the Lower Bay was a sheet of burnished metal which the bow of the police boat sliced like a precision cutting tool. The bulky-shouldered man in peajacket and visored cap standing on the starboard waterway had a metallic appearance too; in the greenish glow of the running-light, his features took on the rugged quality typical of weathered bronze.

There was a battered hardness in Steve Koski's face which added to the impression of some statue regarding the distant shore with stony and unwinking eyes. But no sculptor had ever chiseled a harborman into a pose like that; Lieutenant Koski held the small end of a fiber megaphone to his right ear, meanwhile sweeping the large end in slow arcs toward the crescent of the Staten Island beach.

"Cut her, Irish."

Koski waved with his free hand to the big man at the wheel in the pilothouse.

The hundred and eighty horsepower beneath the *Vigilant's* motor housing quieted; the silence of the June twilight was broken only by the mournful hoot of a barge tug in the Narrows, and the *hrrussh* of the bow wave.

Sergeant Joe Mulcahey mopped his red and sun-polished face with a blue bandanna. "I told you, Steve. When them gulls are squabblin' over scraps the liners toss over at Quarantine, they screech like all hell cut loose."

"Never heard a seagull put a *P* on the end of its 'hell,' Irish. That was a yell for help. Swing her about three points to starboard. That's it. Go ahead, half."

The exhaust rumbled. The police boat lifted its nose, sniffed spray.

Mulcahey peered through the pilothouse window. "There's not so much as a junk-boat between us an' the beach. Maybe we had better circle a bit; sound plays queer tricks over water."

"Steady as you go." Koski stepped down into the cockpit, hung the megaphone on its hook, took the night glasses from their case. "It's a raft. Way inshore." He climbed to the foredeck, binoculars leveled.

"Full ahead, Irish. Kid adrift."

The *Vigilant's* stern squatted in a boiling thunder of frothy wake.

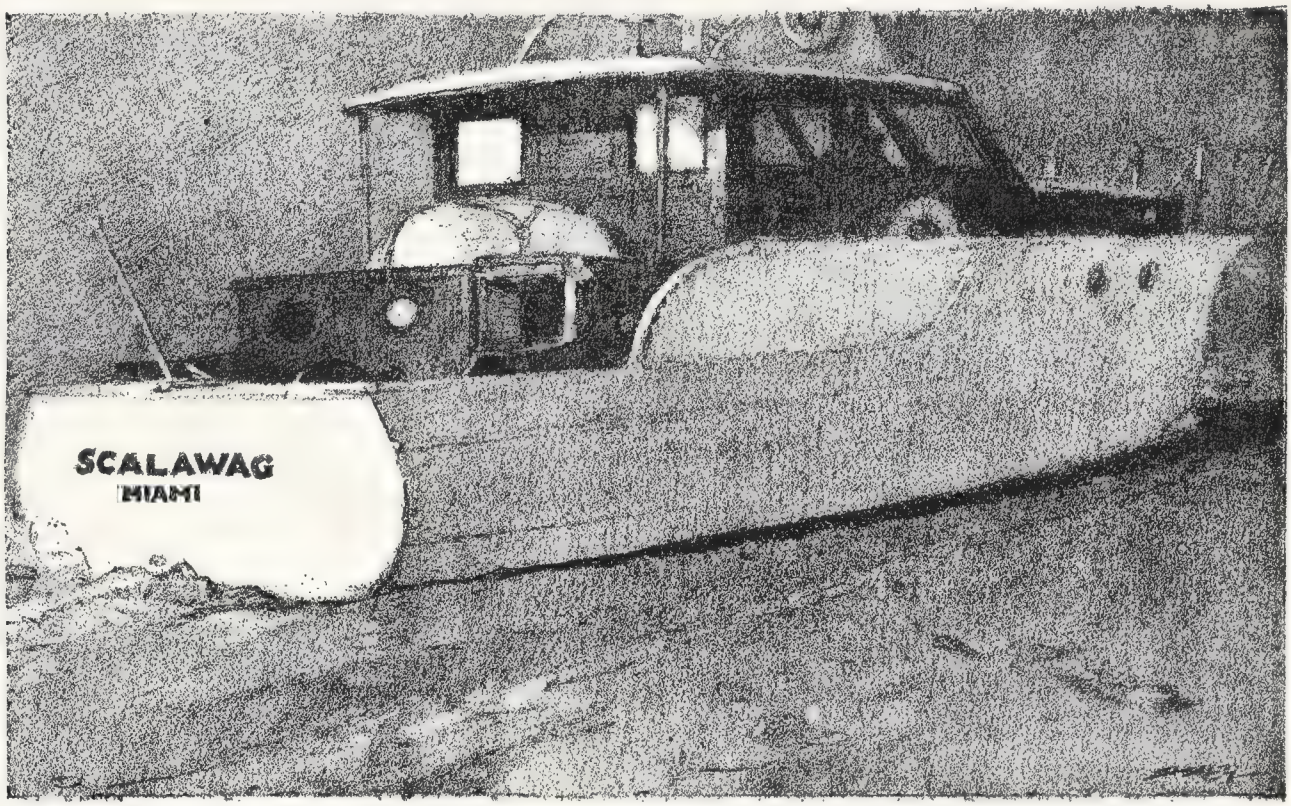
The small figure ahead became visible to the Sergeant: a frantically waving boy who seemed to be standing on the surface of the water just off the six-fathom shelf.

Koski unchocked the boathook, made slow circles with his left hand until the police boat's speed dropped to a knot, then came aft.

The boy yelled, as the *Vigilant* closed in:

"Didja find Ha-a-l? Didja?"

Koski caught the corner of the makeshift raft with his hook, dragged




# Evidence

THE TRAIL OF A KIDNAPED BOY LEADS THE NEW YORK HARBOR POLICE TO AN ADVENTUROUS PURSUIT AND A STRANGE CRIME.

by STEWART STERLING

it alongside, helped the boy over the gunwale.

He was about eleven or twelve, skinny and gangling, with a pinched face that puckered into tears. "Jeeze, Mister, I thought nobody was ever gonna hear me; I thought sure I was gonna drift out t'sea. Didja get Hal?" His eyes darted from the Lieutenant to the Sergeant, into the pilothouse. The puckered mouth and eyes became a grimace of despair.

KOSKI looked at the youngster's bare feet; they were blue with chill. "Who's Hal?"

"Hal Austin—my buddy. He was on there with me, but he got off to ride the barrel." The words spilled out in a confusion of relief and fear. "Me'n him built the raft. . . . We didn' mean to go so far from the Kills, but—"

"When'd you leave Great Kills, son?" Koski found an extra pair of heavy wool socks. "Put these on. I know they're too big, but you don't have to walk in 'em."

"No sir." The boy sat on the motor box. "We left around ten, maybe a little after. We had another oar, but Hal took it to paddle the barrel back, an' then the guy took him off in the other boat—"

"Take it easy, fella." Koski wrapped his jacket around the narrow shoulders. "You been on that raft all day? Had anything to eat?"

"No sir. We didn' expect to be out so long, so we didn' take any san'wiches. Hal had a chocklit bar but he didn't eat it, not before the man got him, anyway. I'm not hungry so much, but I'm awful thirsty."

"We can fix that." The Lieutenant filled a white enameled cup from the tank faucet. "Don't slosh it down. Slow and easy. What's your name?"

"Benjamin R. Fallman. But the bunch calls me Boney—nearly everybody does except Pop. Didn' you see the boat that picked up Hal?"

"No. What time was that?"

"Noon, about. My watch stopped." Boney poked a scrawny wrist out to display a tinny timepiece tied with brown ribbon. "There was a fog, an awful fog—"

"We couldn't see the buoys until we got right on top of 'em—that's right." Koski nodded.

"So I wanted to paddle back to the beach, but then Hal saw this barrel—"

MULCAHEY brought slabs of rye bread with a thick filling of salami. "Put this where it'll do the most good."

"Before you get your mouth full," Koski said, "what's with this barrel?"

"Well, it was steel, see—"

"A drum? Like an oil drum?"

"Yeah. That's what it was. It was just driftin'—only a little ways off—an' Hal wanted to get it because it was floatin' low on the water like maybe it was half full, an' we thought maybe it'd be worth a few bucks."

Boney bit into the sandwich.

"I know," Koski said solemnly. "So—"

"Trouble was, it floated faster than the raft did. Faster'n we could paddle, even. Hal was afraid we'd lose it, so he swam to it—an' took an oar so he could paddle it back—ride it like th' kids do those goofy beach toys—an' paddle it."

"Swimming! In bay water—and in June. Holy Crippers!" Mulcahey puffed out his cheeks and blew.

"Oh, Hal's a *good* swimmer. He won the free-style at the Elks Camp las' summer. He can take care of himself—except I don' know what happened to him." He wolfed the sandwich, morosely.

KOSKI guessed: "You lost him? In the fog?"

"Pretty near, I did. The blame barrel kep' drifting so fast. An' of course it took a while for him to get on it, but finally he did. . . . An' I was hollerin' to him which way to paddle, because I was afraid he couldn't even see me—an' then this motorboat comes along."

"What sort of a boat?" *It could be just one of those things,* Koski thought. *Cruiser or fish-boat picks up a youngster, sets him ashore at the nearest wharf. Kid probably at home by now.* But then, if the other one had reached home safely, why hadn't there been an alarm to the Harbor Precinct to search for this lad here?

"Oh, a big one. With a glass cabin on top an' a steering wheel on top of that, way up high near the mast."

"Fisherman," Mulcahey nodded. "One of them fancy sport fishermen with auxiliary steering, swivel chairs an' a live-bait tank. What color was she?"

"White. An' there was two men on her; I saw 'em just for a second, an' then the fog got so thick I couldn't see anything. But I know they stopped for Hal, because I heard him yell: *'No, I don' wanna come on board—Boney's back there on th' raft waitin' for me.'*"

"That's all you heard?" Koski wondered what kind of yachtsman he might be who would take one of two kids on board and leave the other to drift toward the Hook and the open sea.

"Yes sir. I yelled as loud as I could, an' I kept on shoutin' for, oh, a long time, but they didn't hear me, I guess. Anyway, they couldn't find me—because I know they must have looked. Hal would 'a' made 'em look for me."

The loud-speaker in the pilothouse crackled and sputtered; its sepulchral tone began to chant:

*"Double You Enn Eff Dee to Patrol Nine. Come in, Nine. Come in, Nine. . . ."*

Koski snapped the toggle to TALK. *"Vigilant* to Double You Enn Eff Dee. Over."

*"Urgent requesting search for two boys ages eleven and thirteen believed adrift on home-made raft between Great Kills and Hoffman's Island. Raft last seen off Great South Beach eleven-thirty ayem. Sending Six from Clason Point to assist. Maintain contact. Over."*

Koski's tone was thoughtful when he replied: "Already located one boy, Benjamin Fallman. Other believed to have been picked up by fishing cruiser around noon. Will try to locate cruiser and report. Koski here. That is all."

Mulcahey stared at his superior. "This kid says they got his chum, Steve. Whaddya mean, 'Will try to locate'?"

"What I said, Irish. If this Hal was rescued at noon, why hasn't he let his folks know he's all right? He ought to have had time to do that—in eight hours."

"If you'd so kindly tell me why we are headin' for the barn post-haste," —Mulcahey had to raise his voice above the rumbling reverberations of the motor—"instead of using our searchlight to inspect flotsam and stuff which a youngster might grab as a last straw—"

"They picked Hal up." Koski ransacked the old cigar-box behind the binnacle, came up with a packet of gum. "Kid didn't holler to his sidekick here after the boat pulled away. Fisherman never troubled to hunt around for Boney, but scooted straight off toward the Narrows." He gave the gum to the boy huddling his head down into the warm collar of the heavy jacket. "Thing that bothers me most, though—what was the boat doing over near South Beach, anyway?"

"Now you mention it,"—the Sergeant's glance at Koski combined awe and astonishment—"it does sound kinda queer. Those hot-shot boys with the fancy rods and hundred-buck reels don't go after the big ones in scummy harbor water. Especially on an ebb."

"No. What's more, if they were coming back from Manasquan or the Hole beyond Ambrose, they'd have been four or five miles off course—assuming they were bound up-harbor." Koski fiddled with the squawk-box.

The corners of Boney's mouth quivered with recollection. "I don't think that's so funny. There was all that awful fog. They could easy have lost their way."

"Sure," the Sergeant agreed, "but the pea-soup didn't begin to thicken until eleven, and it was gone by three. Besides, any offshore outfit like that would be able to run a compass course, or leastways use their direction-finder."

Koski got his shortwave connection. "Nine to Double You Enn Eff Dee. About that missing boy: Call the tug dispatcher at Moran's, will you? Ask him if he noticed a white sport fisherman, maybe thirty-five or forty feet, with topside controls, around two or two-thirty. She'd have been coming up the main channel or maybe through Buttermilk. Check back, huh? That is all."

If any one individual had noticed that sport fisherman, Moran's eagle-eye signal caller for the red-and-black stacked tugs would be that man. From his high perch in the Whitehall Building, using his high-powered glasses to scan the Hudson, the East River and beyond Ellis all the way to Staten Island, the marshal of the blunt-nosed fleet had helped the Harbor Squad many times before this.

THE *Vigilant* boiled into the Narrows with the first of the flood, overtook a banana boat as if it were anchored, roared past the looming hulls and bright ports of ships waiting for Quarantine inspection. The white finger of the searchlight poked through the gloom to touch black spar buoys and the bell off Diamond Reef.

"If you are thinking," Mulcahey observed, "of finding out what fisherman it was, it will be quite some hunk of an order. There must be a hundred motorboats like that registered out of this area, not to mention she might be a visiting fireman from some other port, Steve."

"Not so many out of your hundred would have been off mooring on a Wednesday noon, Irish." Koski had no illusions about the difficulty of running down one particular powerboat out of the thousands moored or tied up along the seven hundred miles of Harbor Precinct waterfront. But the whole setup made him uneasy for the missing boy; unless the sport fisherman had broken down somewhere, there was no reason why Hal should not have been heard from hours ago.

"This oil drum,"—he put a reassuring hand on Boney's shoulders—"you looked around for it when the fog began to lift?"

"Heck, yes, I sure did." The boy bobbed his head earnestly. "After a while I got tired of hollerin', and just lay down on the raft tryin' to see where I was driftin'. I was afraid I'd get out where the big ships go so fast an' get run down. But then when the fog began to thin out an' I could see clear across to Coney Island, I

couldn't spot that blame barrel." He shivered suddenly. "Or Hal."

The shortwave began to blast:

*"Dispatcher in Whitehall Building thinks bridge-deck sport boat with harpoon pulpit, topside wheel and dory on deck passed Governor's Island around two, making around twenty knots northward along west channel of Hudson. Is that enough? Over."*

"Tell him Koski will buy the beers next time. Can you check gas-pump attendant at Marina, Seventy-fifth and Riverside Drive? Ask same question. That is all."

Mulcahey swore mildly. "Me, I would have been shaggin' around Gravesend or Sheepshead for a fish craft. But you hit it on the nose, like per usual. How do you dope these things?"

"She headed this way. There wasn't any need for her to fool anybody—in a fog like that. And if she was willing to risk meeting a Cunarder in the Narrows in that kind of murk, she must have known her bearings pretty well. Could mean she was better acquainted with the Upper Harbor than the Lower. At that, she must have had some close shaves coming up the main channel at twenty in thick weather."

Koski pulled a PD horse blanket from the port locker, a cork preserver from its rack. "Here, son. Chock yourself off on this life-belt an' wrap this around you. Might's well pound your ear."

"Don't know if I can." Boney chewed his gum disconsolately. "I'm worried about Hal. His mom will be doing nip-ups, wondering what happened to him. She'll blame me, too. She claims I'm always getting Hal into scrapes. I guess he's sure in one now, if he's hangin' onto a railroad tie or somep'n out there." He scowled at the glow of a lighted ferry moving majestically across the black mirror of the water.

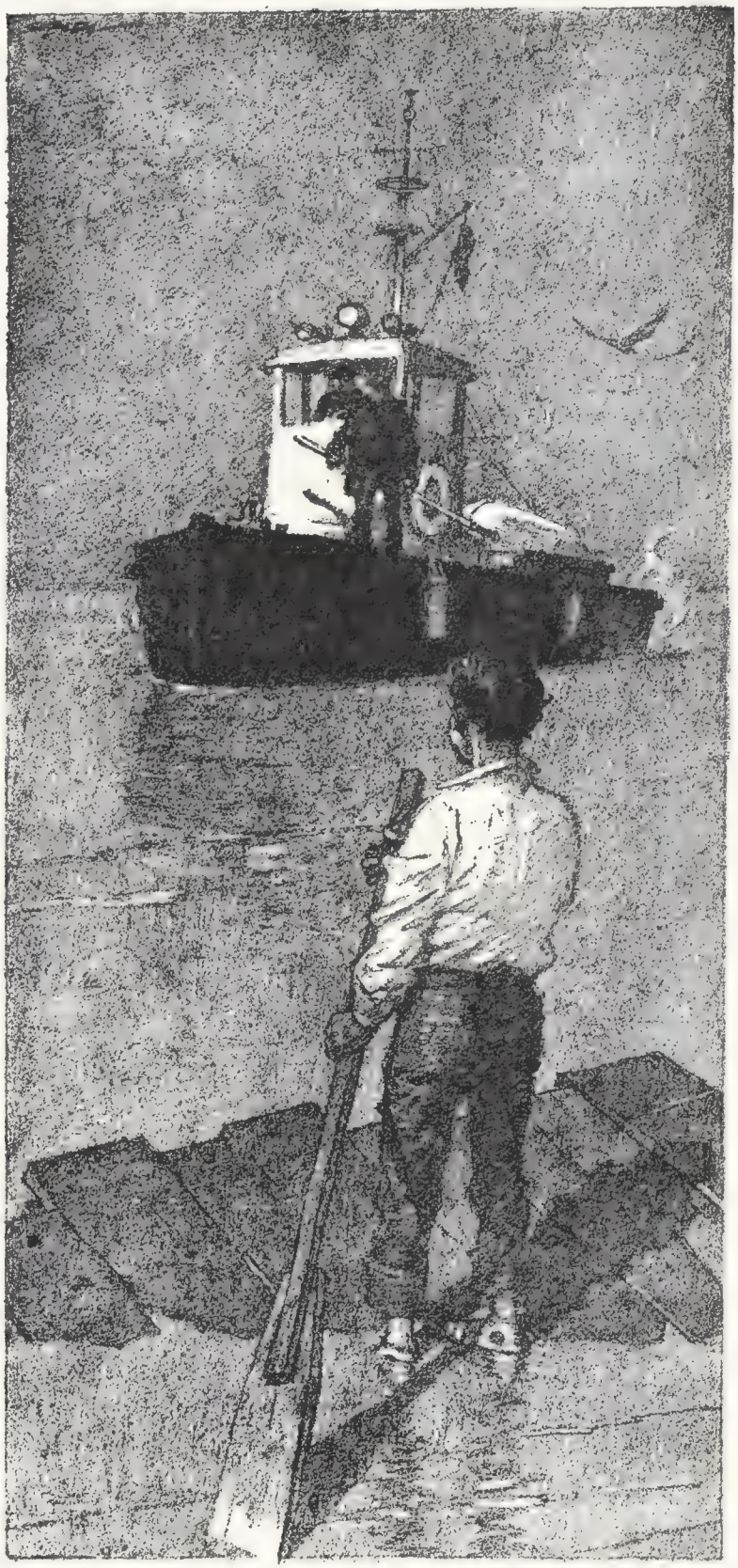
SUDDENLY the zombie voice from the box caused the boy to jump:

*"Marina attendant says craft of type described passed upriver close to Jersey shore around quarter past two. Did not notice where boat put in if it did. Enough? Over."*

Koski used the TALK toggle. "Get hold of bridgeman at the Spuyten Duyvil span. Ask same question. Request Patrol Six to come through Harlem River, checking. That is all."

Mulcahey shook his head wonderingly. "Does your weejee tell you which gunkhole this fisherboy might have snuk into?"

"I don't need any ouija board to tell me there's something sour about a sport fisherman that won't put a Staten Island kid ashore until he's twenty miles away from home." The



***The small figure ahead became a boy who seemed to be standing on the surface of the water. The boy yelled: "Didja find Ha-a-l? Didja?"***

Lieutenant added as an afterthought: "I'd guess we'll find him at one of the clubs on the Jersey side. Say between Edgewater and Alpine."

Boney slept with the blanket hugged up beneath his chin as they bucked the cross traffic moving between Brooklyn and the Jersey freight terminals, rocking-horsed across the turbulent wakes of the commuters' ferries at Weehawken and Hoboken, slid north past gray destroyers and a cruiser moored at Navy buoys at Ninetieth and One Hundred and Tenth. The mechanical voice notified them that no sport fisherman had entered the Harlem River through the Spuyten Duyvil swing bridge.

Opposite One Hundred and Twenty-fifth, Mulcahey took the police boat in close to the Jersey wharves, sent the probing finger of the searchlight in among barges, tugs, and lighters. Occasionally a tugboat skipper would switch on his beam and send it over to cover the *Vigilant,* but as soon as the glare would fix on the square green flag whipping at the jackstaff, the light would quickly move away and black out.

As their exhaust echoed from a bridge pier beneath the amber necklace hung so daintily across the river's throat, Koski spoke without moving the binoculars from his eyes:

"At the Riveredge, Irish. In at the float. Forget the light. Just coast in."

They ghosted up to the yacht-club float with the motor barely turning over.

The fisherman was a husky forty-five-footer; her railed pulpit extending out over the bow made her look even bigger. The steering station atop the high deckhouse was shiny with brass. The name in black on the transom was *Scalawag, Miami.* There were lights below, none in the deckhouse.

The *Vigilant* nosed in astern. Koski dropped over the gunwale to the float.

A man came up the aft companionway into the *Scalawag's* deckhouse. He wore a red-checked flannel shirt and khaki slacks. A long-billed cap shaded a plump, heavy-jawed face. The nose was short and blunt, the eyes wide set, the mouth broad and humorous beneath a rakish mustache.

"Hi, guy," he waved affably.

Koski asked: "You the owner?"

"Owner, skipper, cook and galley slave—that's me. Wainwright's the name on ship's articles." The man came out of the deckhouse, leaned on the rail with his forearms. "What can I do for you?"

"Looking for a boy you picked up off South Beach this noon." Koski's eyes went to black oil smudges beneath the *Scalawag's* rub-rail just forward of the engine compartment porthole.

"Slight correction required." Wainwright shook his head. "We *tried* to pick up a lad who was doing his damnedest to ride an oil drum and paddle it at the same time, but the little fathead wouldn't come aboard. We were in a hurry to get here because one of our party got a hook in her hand this morning, and we thought she ought to have it looked after. So naturally we couldn't fool around with the mucker. When we left him, he was still paddling. Why? Didn't he make it back to his friend?"

From the *Vigilant's* cockpit a shrill voice piped up: "No, he didn't! An' I think you're lyin', Mister! Because I know Hal would 'a' kept on hollerin' for me if you hadn't picked him up!"

Wainwright did a one-hand vault over the rail to land on the float at Koski's side. He was about thirty, solid but not stocky, lithe but not lean. "Sorry, young fella—if you were the pal he spoke about. But he wouldn't have any part of a lift. He even pushed away the boathook my engineer tried to get him to grab."

Boney stared at him speechlessly, then swung around and his shoulders began to shake convulsively. Mulcahey bent over him.

Koski rubbed his jaw thoughtfully. "Kid says he saw his friend hauled aboard your boat, Mr. Wainwright."

The mouth beneath the mustache made a tight smile. "I don't blame him for being upset. But he's mistaken. The boy didn't come within ten feet of my boat."

"No?" Koski regarded him bleakly. "Then who you got on board whose oily paw makes a print as small as that?" He indicated the oil smudges. "And there's a place where something has scraped varnish off your rail—the way an oil drum might if it was hauled aboard kind of clumsy."

Wainwright's smile became stiff. "We banged into a spar buoy in the fog; that's what damaged our rail. But I'm inclined to resent your implication that I do know what happened to that poor dope on that oil drum."

"That's just a starter." Koski was brusque. "Maybe we'll give you a couple more things to resent. I'm coming aboard."

He didn't wait for any formal invitation; he swung himself up.

Wainwright called up after him:

"Make yourself at home. There's Scotch in the locker over the chart table. And when you're through, you might ask some of the small fry up at the clubhouse about that smudge on the topside. They climb all over the *Scalawag.* See, I'm broad-minded. I don't care who comes aboard."

Koski thought: *"You're just too damned obliging, Mister. Ordinary guy would get sore at having his boat searched, make a fuss about police needing a warrant to come aboard. Another thing, you got an explanation for every angle. People with nothing to hide never bother to give out with all that yakety-yak!"*

The deckhouse had a sofa berth across the after bulkhead, a long locker under it. Koski took a quick peek: coils of manila, cans of Coston flares, canvas pockets with code flags. No place for a boy to be concealed.

He went down to the galley, glistening with monel, bright with copper-bottomed pans. Cupboards beneath sink and dish rack were cluttered with pails, lard tins, dishpans.

A door opened beside the companionway, a face dark with whisker bristle and grease streaks appeared above the bib of gray coveralls. Black eyes, crinkled with suspicion, inspected the Lieutenant sullenly. "What the hell *you* doin'?"

Koski shouldered past him into the engine-room beneath the deckhouse. "Who wants to know?"

The engineer ran grimy fingers through his stubble of thick blue-black hair. "Oh, a wise creep! You mess around with my gear, an' you'll find out who I am quick enough. Last time we had any badges aboard, in Norfolk, I missed two wrenches afterward."

"You'll be the one who hauled the kid off the oil drum." Koski admired the twin six-cylinder jobs, made a swift survey of the auxiliary generator, the pumps, the elaborate switchboard.

The engineer snarled: "Nobody hauled no one off nothin'! I'm the dummy who asked Mr. Wainwright to stop so we could drag some brat out of the bay—so all we get is a ha-ha from him and a goin'-over by you crummy bums. I hope the little louse has to hang onto that oil barrel all night!"

Koski studied the shaggy, scowling brows, the in-pinched lips. "Better hope we find him. If we don't, we'll have to run you and your boss through the grinder." He jerked a thumb at a drum standing on end near the lighting generator; it was black, with Ramshead Motor Oil—Cleans As It Lubricates in red stenciling across its girth. "What kind of drum was it the kid found? One like that?"

The shaggy eyebrows moved upward; the corners of the sharp mouth went down. "I guess so. They're all the same when you empty 'em, aren't they?"

Koski opened a tool compartment, glanced inside. "The kid couldn't have jockeyed an empty. Ever try to ride an empty barrel that was float-

*"Kid says he saw his friend hauled aboard your boat, Mr. Wainwright."*

ing? Like birling a log with roller skates on your feet."

He moved aft, toward the lazarette, passing close to the Ramshead drum. One end had been hacksawed off to make a container for cotton waste and engine rags. The raw metal where the hacksaw had cut it was still bright. A strong, queer stench arose from the rags to overpower the clean, oily smell of the hot motors. It was an odor Koski remembered but couldn't recognize. Vaguely it reminded him of cabins on the old Albany night boats; the sweaty odor of too many humans too close together—dancing, making love.

Silver paper glinted among the rags in the drum; it looked like the foil wrapper of a candy bar. Kids weren't the only ones who ate candy bars, of course.

"What were you after, this morning?" he asked. "Too early for bluefish."

"Eels," the engineer sneered. "We always go after eels with a harpoon."

"One way to handle a slippery customer." Koski went through the galley, to a cabin with built-in berths on each side, a folding table between. Beneath each bunk were three shallow drawers; forward were full-length lockers. He didn't bother with the drawers; they couldn't very well have crammed a teen-age boy into a drawer four inches deep. But the lockers were large enough—and were locked.

"Call your boss down here," he said.

"Call him yourself." The engineer made a pushing-away gesture. "Don't be givin' me no orders."

From the deckhouse Wainwright's genial voice chided: "Don't be bullheaded, Ray. Just because the officer is making a nuisance of himself, there's no reason for you to be disagreeable." He ran lightly down the steps. "What you want, Officer? Keys to those lockers?"

"Open 'em up." Koski rapped on one of the paneled doors.

"Sure." The owner jingled keys, used one.

The port locker held a rod rack with jointed poles in gray flannel cases, bait rods in varnished sockets, leather

*Illustrated by Raymond Sisley*

*"To me," Mulcahey said, "you'd contaminate a garbage incinerator."*

reel cases, pegs for fish-line spools. The starboard compartment was full of clothing on hangers, suits, a topcoat, a suède jacket.

WAINWRIGHT frowned. "I don't mind your giving my boat the once-over; I'm rather proud of her. But what gave you the cockeyed notion I'd want to kidnap a boy and hold him here?"

Koski opened the door to the toilet room beyond the cabin, switched on the light. Bowl, basin, medicine cabinet, a small linen locker. Against the white of the lavatory basin, a glint of glass. He touched a fingertip to it—a small segment with a rounded edge and a tiny hole through it. "The kid's mother is worried stiff about him; we have to make a report about the youngster. The last place he was seen was beside this boat. You and your engineer say the boy was never on board, but we can't take your word for that." He kept his hand out of the owner's line of vision, slipped the bit of glass in his jacket pocket.

Wainwright scoffed: "Suit yourself. Waste all the time you want to, while you ought to be down the bay looking for that poor dope drifting around in the dark. But if you don't mind, let Ray get back to his chores; there's a manifold gasket that has to be fixed before we take off tomorrow morning."

"That's all right," the Lieutenant agreed quietly. "What about this girl who got stuck with a fishhook? Who's she? Where is she?"

"A friend. She's gone to her hotel. You don't think I'm sap enough to give you her name so you can annoy her too? I come up here from Florida on business, and while I'm here I decide to take a whirl at your northern fishing grounds—and run into all this hullabaloo—"

"What's your business, Mister?"

Wainwright showed his teeth in a wide grin. "I'm a speculator. I buy things, hold 'em for a rise, sell 'em at a profit."

"What kind of things?"

"You name it. Tung oil, coco beans, ginseng, angora wool, balsa wood—"

"Stuff from abroad."

"Mostly. Yes."

"Big operator, huh?"

"Not so big. No. Not so smart either, perhaps. But I get by." The owner shrugged. "Without cutting too many corners."

Koski shook his head dubiously. "It would have to be something big, for anyone to hunt around the harbor for an oil drum and do away with the kid who happened to find it first. I guess that wouldn't be you, then."

The owner held out his arms at shoulder height, let them drop. "You seem to have it all figured out, but as far as the *Scalawag's* concerned, you've got it all wrong, believe me."

"I guess I have to." Koski was gruff. "Well—no hard feelings, huh?" He opened the door to the rope locker, peered inside without interest. "I'm going to send that other youngster home and get down the bay again."

"If you see me out there in the morning," said Wainwright as he went to the deckhouse with him, "take my word for it, we won't be trolling for oil drums!"

Koski dropped to the float, went to the *Vigilant*. Boney perched on the motor box, the blanket around his knees, his eyes red.

"This Hal pal of yours," Koski said softly. "Did he wear glasses?"

"Yeah, sure. Big round ones. They made him look kind of like an owl. Why?" The boy jumped up.

"Just a shot in the dark, young fella." Koski punched him gently in the ribs. "You better shed that cocoon an' come up to the clubhouse with me. We're going to call a taxi, scoot you home."

A PLUMP youth came pounding down the plank ramp breathlessly. From the rail of the fisherman, Wainwright called: "For me, Eddie?"

"No sir, Mr. Wainwright," the youth panted. "I was just running because I saw the police boat here. There hasn't been any phone call for you yet. I'll let you know the minute one comes."

"Two bits waiting, when you do." Wainwright disappeared down the companionway. Koski thought he sounded disappointed.

He left Eddie making juvenile inquiries of the Sergeant, and led Boney up to the yacht club.

There was only a watchman in the dinghy shed; no one in the clubhouse. Koski used the phone booth, called a cab, then used another coin to get the operator.

When he got her, he said:

"This is the Police Department. Put me on to your supervisor. . . . Supervisor, this is Lieutenant Koski, New York Police, Harbor Precinct, Shield 7022. . . . That's right. . . . I want this phone tagged . . . yes . . . in a little while somebody might call in here for a Mr. Wainwright . . . *W* as in *water; a* as in *anchor*. . . . That's it. . . . I want the call traced. . . . Or maybe the gent will call from here. . . . I want that traced, too. . . . When you get something on it, phone Police Headquarters, New York and ask them to relay it to Koski. . . . Got that? . . . Swell—much obliged."

When the taxi came, Boney hesitated:

"Gee, Mister, I hate to go an' leave it up in the air this way about Hal. You know, he's my very best friend. If I could *do* anything—"

"Best thing you can do is go home and square yourself. The Sarge knows where to get in touch with you. We'll let you know about Hal."

"All right. Gee, thanks a whole lot—"

"Okay. See you. So long, Boney." He waved cheerily.

BACK at the float, there was no sign of activity on the *Scalawag*. Mulcahey had the Lloyds Register open on the pilothouse shelf.

"This lug must just have bought that tub, Steve. She's listed here as belonging to Carl De Mund, of Miami. That was only last year."

"De Mund," Koski mused. "De Mund. There was a bird by that name took a one-way to Alcatraz for killing an Immigration agent off the Keys a few months ago."

"No kiddin'!" The Sergeant peered through the glass at the fisherman. "Still, it don't necessarily mean a thing. He could have bought it through a broker. This De Mund wouldn't have had to be a teammate."

"No," Koski said. "It might all be legitimate. But I smelled something stinking on that crate. Let's get under way."

The *Vigilant* was a mile below the bridge, close to the New York shore, when the squawk-box cut in:

*Wainwright telephoned café Bell and Buoy at nine-five peeyem asking for a Sweetie Dendon. . . . Dendon not at café so Wainwright left word for him to call the minute he got in. . . . Do you wish tracer tag left in? Over.*

OUTSIDE, blue neon stuttered in spasmodic imitation of a buoy rocking in a seaway. Inside, blue music blared from a monstrosity of a jukebox. The long room was gray with smoke, rank with liquor, noisy with laughter.

Koski's practiced ear picked out conversational under-currents beneath the surface commotion; the slurred burr of Clydeside, clipped Cockney of Thameside, nasal inflections of Marseilles, Lisbon, Amsterdam. None of the talk at the mirror-backed bar stopped at the sight of a police cap, though there were many saloons along West Street in which Koski's entrance would have caused a sudden, tense hush of expectancy. The Bell and Buoy was patronized by stewards, waiters and assistant chefs off the transatlantic liners; they had nothing to fear from an American policeman—ordinarily.

The Lieutenant rested an elbow on the bar, a boot on the rail. Of the bartender he inquired casually: "Dendon been around?"

The barman's eyes flicked automatically to a boisterous group clustered at the far end of the polished walnut. "That I wouldn' know, Chief." His gaze returned blandly to Koski's weather-bitten face. "These birds sling a lingo I don't grab more'n half the time, except when they're tellin' me to milk a fresh head on a stale ale."

"Sweetie Dendon. Thought you might know him." Koski shrugged. "Draw one. Light."

The beer-tap foamed. "Maybe I could ask around. If you want him for something."

"Only to ask him a question. Never mind. Maybe he'll blow in after a while."

"If he's off a Cunarder, prob'ly will, if you wait long enough." The barman used his rag perfunctorily, busied himself serving other customers.

Presently a lank, gangly individual, with stringy hair that needed cutting and an alcoholic tinge to his nose, hiccoughed loudly and departed in the direction of This Is It. He paused briefly beside the roistering group at the end of the bar, moved on and vanished into the men's room.

Jocular remarks penetrated the welter of sound. "Wot's the bleedin' 'urry, Sweetie?" . . . "Cawn't you bear to be aw'y from 'er another moment, you tourist-clawss Casanova?"

A short, blond man with a smooth, pink-glass face and pale blue eyes slapped change on the bar, muttered beneath his breath. His companions refused to be toned down. "You're in me for a bottle, you barstard! What do you sye to that?"

The blond man clapped a shoulder, thumped a back, departed hastily.

Koski met him halfway to the door.

"Dendon," he said quietly.

The man kept striding toward the street.

Koski caught his arm. "Word with you, Mister."

Dendon looked over his shoulder; there was panic in the pale blue eyes. "What's the matter?"

"You the gent who slugged a dame up at Mike's Place this afternoon—grabbed her purse?"

"Hell, no. I've never been in Mike's Place." Relief flooded the transparent pinkness of the cherubic features. "You got the wrong man, Officer."

"Have I? Let's see." Koski pushed him gently toward an unoccupied booth. "Park your pants. Empty your pockets on the table."

"A fine thing. Decent citizens getting mauled around for nothing."

"You haven't been mauled—yet. Get your wallet on the table. Anything else you tote around. Snap it up."

With a show of reluctance Dendon produced a flat alligator wallet. Koski flipped it open. Inside were a packet of crisp pound notes, a smaller layer of American greenbacks, mostly fives. An identification card beneath a celluloid cover said that Aubrey Dendon, 32, white, single, British, was employed as pastry chef by the White Star Line, had been certified as physically fit on the 17th of May, and was entitled to such courtesies and considerations as His Royal Majesty's consular representatives might see proper to extend in his behalf.

Koski examined the slit pockets of the wallet, found nothing but cards with London and Liverpool street addresses, and a twice-folded Marconigram from the *Kymsic's* radio-room:

> HARRIET PASSED AWAY YESTERDAY. BURIAL TUESDAY AT TWO. WILL YOU REACH HERE IN TIME? SIGNATURE: WILFORD.

The radio message was dated Monday and had been filed in New York at ten-thirty A.M.

KOSKI eyed the miscellany Dendon was spreading on the table. Pocket knife, handkerchief, lighter, gold pencil, key-ring, British coins, nail-clipper, an address book, Mothersills pills, matches.

The Lieutenant tapped the radiogram with his forefinger. "Didn't make it, did you?"

"No." Dendon tried to appear bereaved. "Poor Harriet!"

"But the burial took place on schedule?"

"Why, yes. Naturally."

"It wouldn't have been a burial at sea, would it?"

"What?"

"Like an oil drum, say? Getting dropped overside?"

The pinkness drained out of the pastry chef's face, leaving it waxy and white. He put both hands on the table, pushing himself up from his seat as if afraid his legs might not support him.

"I—I don't understand."

"Yep. You do. I do, too. You hope I'm bluffing, but I'm not. We're wise to the whole business. Except I don't believe you were in on the kidnaping. That carries a death penalty here in the States, and you don't look to me as if you had guts enough to run that kind of risk."

"Kidnaping? You're balmy!" Dendon beckoned excitedly to three of his friends who were watching intently from the bar. They headed for the booth, sobered, belligerent.

"You'll get a chance to ask Wainwright if we're kidding about that electric chair." Koski swiveled around to face the oncoming three. A fourth man, a giant in a tight-fitting dinner jacket, came up behind them. "Tell your pals to beat it before you get in any deeper. I might make a deal with you, to get the conviction we're after —but you'll have to make up your mind fast."

Dendon swallowed, worked his lips silently for a couple of seconds. Then he flapped neatly manicured hands at the approaching quartet. "It's all right, chums. All right. No help needed. Just a little mistake."

"That's right," Koski agreed calmly. "We can straighten it all out at the station. Come on."

The one who'd insisted he had a drink coming from Dendon growled: "If 'e's on your neck, myte—just sye the word; we'll tyke 'im off!"

"No, no, Harry," Dendon pleaded. "All serene. I'll go 'long with him. Be back in no time, won't I?" he inquired anxiously of the Lieutenant.

"Sooner you get started, sooner you'll get straight." Koski stuffed the wallet and address book in his pocket, scooped up the rest of the articles, held them out to Dendon. "Let's hop."

He didn't look around as he marched his prisoner to the door; the Bell and Buoy was very quiet save for the caterwauling of some girl on a juke-box record: *Lucky, Lucky Me.*

On the street, he said: "I'll ride you around to the precinct house in style. My boat's at Pier Seven."

Dendon half turned, moaned. A familiar voice behind the Lieutenant's right ear said softly: "You'll ride in a long black car if you don't stand perfectly still and keep absolutely quiet."

Koski's reflexes galvanized. His right elbow jabbed down, back to deflect the barrel. He pinwheeled to twist from the expected blast. His left hand dived for his holster.

It was riskier than facing a gun, having one jammed into your kidneys. Other way, you had a chance to jolt the heel of your hand against the muzzle, slamming the weapon back, so for a split second any pull on the trigger was neutralized. This way you were gambling in the dark; the dice were loaded, and the other guy was calling the shots.

But the anticipated shock didn't come. A hand clamped on his left shoulder, wrenched him off balance; Wainwright's soft voice said:

"That's it, Ray. No noise. Take him quiet."

Another muzzle rammed hard into the Lieutenant's short ribs under his heart—the engineer used enough force to knock the wind out of Koski. The instinct of the man from the Marine Division was to jerk his gun free, shoot it out as long as he lasted. But years of waterfront patrols had taught him how often instinct can be bad counsel in a jam.

Besides, a dead cop rescues no kids. He had no son of his own, but he knew how he'd feel if Hal had been his own—how the boy's folks must be sweating it out. And at the moment, Koski seemed to be the only person who had any idea what had happened to the lad. It wouldn't help Hal much if the ambulance had to make a trip to the city morgue on Koski's account.

"Grab your ears, cop." The engineer was surly. "We got no time to wrassle you around. This party's strictly for Sweetie."

Koski put his hands on his jacket lapels. He wouldn't go to the mat for this Dendon character—not so long as that youngster was still in danger. The pastry chef had got in with this *Scalawag* outfit on his own; he could try to get out by himself. In fact he was attempting it, right now.

Dendon was lunging against Koski, bumping him into Wainwright, into that lethal muzzle. The pressure of the gun made Koski's spine crack—he braced himself for the smash of a bullet. None came. Instead, Wainwright stuck out a foot as Dendon whirled to dart away. The chef sprawled on the sidewalk. He bounced off a hydrant as he fell.

The *Scalawag's* owner was sympathetic. "Tsk, tsk, Sweetie! Must be schwocked. What you been drinking? Don't seem to have any coördination."

The man on the sidewalk moaned.

Ray bulled Koski toward a doorway deep in shadow. His fingers searched under the police jacket, found the holster, yanked out the service special. "You love to shove your snoot into other people's doors, cop. Okay. Open that one. Quick, or no matter what the boss says, I'll click the switch on you."

Koski turned the knob. A whiff of cooking cabbage and wet diapers came from the dim-lit hall where one tired bulb leaned from a tipsy wall socket. Gray painted steps climbed against a scabby wall. A rusty tricycle lay on its side among a litter of newspapers; a shabby perambulator stood in the shadows.

Behind him Dendon screamed once —then the high-pitched shrill voice broke off as if a needle had been abruptly lifted from a spinning record.

The engineer gave him a final push. "I got six keys to lock this door from the outside." He waggled the police gun. "So count to a thousand before you poke your puss out. Catch?"

Koski spoke without turning. "That *Scalawag*, that's quite a bunch of boat. Your boss must not care much about it. He won't be using it long, after this."

"What *you* think! He'll use it long enough." The door slammed. Somewhere above, a baby wailed.

Koski reached up, snapped off the light. He dropped flat on the floor, flung the door open with one upstretched hand.

The street was empty. Down the block, a car roared from the curb, and rubber squealed as tires slewed around the corner at high speed.

He hurried into the Bell and Buoy, closeted himself in the phone booth, gave license number and descriptions of the three to the Bureau of Communications. When he finished, the assistant dispatcher said:

"They been trying to reach you on board Nine, Lieutenant."

"Who?"

"Six patrol. Left a message with your Sarge."

"What?"

"Reads: 'Sport fisherman corresponding your alarm, name *Scalawag*, registered Miami, now tied off coal dock Harlem River at Two Hundred Tenth. Do you wish us to detain? Emory, Lieutenant.' You want to answer?"

"When'd that go out?"

"Ten eighteen P.M."

"Forty-five minutes ago!" Wainwright must have scurried across the Harlem as soon as the *Vigilant* left

*"If 'e's on your neck, myte—just sye the word; we'll tyke 'im off!"*

the yacht club. "Yes. Ask 'em to board and hold owner and crew when they return. Emory'd better post his sergeant on the dock; the boat owner'll probably come in looking for trouble."

Unless Wainwright had abandoned the *Scalawag*—in which case an extremely disagreeable contingency occured to Koski—the boy ought to be safe enough for another hour; the *Vigilant* would reach the coal dock before then.

There was the outside chance the kid might already have been knocked in the head and dropped overside, but the cagey manner in which Wainwright must have schemed out the business with the oil drum didn't check with anything as dumb as dumping a body in the river, where it might float up and be recovered as evidence.

WHETHER the pastry chef would still be around an hour from now—that was a horse of another color. He rang the dispatcher again, asked that patrol cars be notified of Wainwright's probable route north and his destination.

Mulcahey was waiting for him on the pierhead, ruddy faced in the *Vigilant's* port running-light.

"Shortwave from Emory, Steve. That fisherman went carousin' over to the Harlem."

"I got the message, Irish. Cast off. We're due up there double quick."

"There's a fog rollin' in from the Sound." The Sergeant looped lines over the bollards. "Make it tough for those helicopters."

"Don't hand me riddles; I just ran into a couple."

Mulcahey got the motor rumbling. "They got half the Cee-Gee's scourin' the Lower Bay for that Hal Austin. Helicopters droppin' flares. A squad of Sea Scouts from Perth Amboy are out in a sea-sled. They even rung in one of the Army tugs from Fort Hamilton. You never heard such commotion."

"I heard some at the Bell and Buoy. It doesn't make me feel any easier about the youngster."

The *Vigilant* headed north with foam on her tail and a bone in her teeth.

"You latch onto this Dendon?"

"For a minute." He briefed the Sergeant. "This pastry chef was in cahoots with Wainwright. They had an oil drum full of something they aimed to get past Customs duty free. Dendon worked below deck where they keep those big freight ports open in calm weather in the summer, for a little cool air. Nobody'd have noticed him at two in the morning, particularly if there'd been a fog. He must've dumped the drum out in the Lower Bay long before they got in where the Quarantine people could have seen him. Probably tied a sack of rock salt to it, to make it sink.

"Shades of the booze-runners!"

"Same trick, yes. Salt dissolved, no weight to keep the drum down. It'd float to the surface in eight or nine hours. Wainwright went looking for it, found this Hal straddling it. Wainwright had to get the drum, but the boy wouldn't get off. So he had to take the youngster too. Then I think they found the stuff that was supposed to be in the drum wasn't there."

"You figure that with X-rays?"

"With common sense. Why'd they be so anxious to get in touch with Dendon, if everything'd gone according to plan? Why'd they be sore at him when they caught up with him?"

"Oh."

"So after they hauled the drum aboard and cut it open, they didn't know how to get rid of the kid—he'd put up a holler, and the whole keg of nails would be split. So they—did something to keep him quiet."

Mulcahey swore with feeling.

AT the bridge the fog hit them. By the time they blew for the draw at Spuyten Duyvil, it was an impenetrable blanket.

Mulcahey played it by ear, listening to the echo of the exhaust to tell him where he was.

The shortwave sputtered.

Patrol Six had lost the *Scalawag*. Their radio had gone sour immediately after sending the message about locating the fisherman at the coal dock. By the time they'd found the loose wire and reconnected it, they

were too late to get on board Wainwright's boat. They'd been standing off the dock in the river, running slowly back and forth. But somehow, in the dense mist, the fisherman had drifted past without using her motor! Emory's launch was going toward the East River, trying to locate the *Scalawag*.

It was Koski's turn to curse; he did it with earnest thoroughness.

"That tears it, unless we can catch 'em, Irish. That kid's really in a tough spot now. My fault, too. I should have searched that tub till I found him."

"They'd go toward the Sound, Coach. They'd have to. We haven't heard any horn for the drawbridge and it wouldn't open without a signal."

"Let her out—and pray we don't meet any car-floats, Sarge."

THEY thundered under bridges toward Hell Gate, missed a tow and tug at Mill Rock by a coat of varnish, boiled into the Hell Gate current.

A mile beyond, the mist thinned momentarily. In the loom from the North Brother Island Lighthouse, a white hull. Only a hundred yards ahead. The *Scalawag!*

Koski lifted the T-gun from its rack.

"Bump her, Sarge. Knock 'em off their feet."

"Hey," Mulcahey pointed. "Look! They're dumpin' something overside!"

The long white finger poked out across the water from the police boat's Sperry, its light diffused in the wreathing mist. A fountain of spray cascaded up over the *Scalawag's* cockpit; something heavy had plunged in from the fisherman's deckhouse. The dumping had been done from the far side; there'd been no chance for Koski to make sure what had gone overboard—but he thought he knew.

The *Scalawag* slowed. Her owner came out of the deckhouse, shading his eyes from the glare of the searchlight. He had no gun. The engineer remained at the wheel.

"Don't need to ram 'em, Irish. They're not going to buck us." Koski cradled the submachine gun in the crook of his elbow.

The *Vigilant* came up on the fisherman's quarter, touched the *Scalawag's* coaming.

"Tell your engineer to cut your motor, Wainwright. No, don't go below yourself. Step across here to our foredeck. Get the lead out. Hop!"

The *Scalawag's* screw stopped. Wainwright crossed to the *Vigilant*, a genial smile crinkling his face.

Koski took handcuffs from the chart drawer. "Lock him to that ring-bolt on the engine housing, Irish."

"I should give him a couple extra cuffs on my own, for the kid's sake," Mulcahey muttered. He ushered the *Scalawag's* owner amidships, made him sit on the motor housing, locked one wrist to the ring-bolt, between the man's knees.

Wainwright scoffed: "What's the charge, officer? Taking a cop's gun from him—when he didn't even put up a fight? *That'll* sound fine in court!"

Koski shook his head. "We'll let you explain to the court. About that boy."

"There'll be a slight matter of proof to attend to, first." Wainwright waved his free hand airily. "There never was any boy on the *Scalawag*. You'll find it difficult to demonstrate otherwise."

"Sarge." Koski tossed a second pair of handcuffs. "Lock that engineer to the *Scalawag's* wheel."

"I only hope he gives me an argument." Mulcahey beamed at the thought.

"And then look in the bait tank under the fish boat's stern deck. That's the one place I forgot, Irish. It ought to be big enough to hide a small boy."

"Cripes!" Mulcahey scowled. "If he's there an' they didn't drain the water before they put him in—it's not handcuffs I'll be needin', Steve! I will give that engineer a dose of his own—"

"You'll give a peek in the engine-room, see if there's a Ramshead oil drum. Open at one end." Koski went forward. "We're going to tow the *Scalawag*. You'll stay aboard her." He carried the fisherman's anchor from her bow to the *Vigilant's* stern bitts.

Wainwright watched with amusement. "Why all the hoop-de-doo about one kid? You'll look pretty silly when he shows up safe and sound."

"In my business," said Koski as he hauled the towline in short, "looking silly is better'n being sorry. Was it Dendon you heaved overside just now?"

"Dendon? Ray didn't even bother to beat him up. He's a sensitive blossom, Sweetie is; he wilts easily. We let him go because I was afraid we'd have to buy him a funeral."

Mulcahey came up on the *Scalawag's* bow. "Kid's not here. But the bait tank is dry, an' there's a piece that looks like it'd been tore off some blue jeans, caught in the zinc lining."

"That's where they were keeping him. How about the drum?"

"I couldn't see any, Steve."

CREASES showed in the Lieutenant's forehead. "Well, keep hunting around. And Irish—"

"Yuh?"

"There's a radio in that deckhouse. In about ten minutes see if you can tune it in on the Double You Enn Pee Dee wave. If you can, keep it on. Make sure that engineer hears it. Maybe it'll help him to remember what happened to that boy."

Mulcahey peered dubiously at his superior. "I do not get that."

"You will. Listen. Make sure *he* does. I'm going to work on this end. See what you can do with the engineer."

The *Vigilant* turned back toward the Hell Gate sluice. The *Scalawag* tagged astern. The fog made the night luminous with emerald and amber from the channel lights.

On the police boat, Koski slowed to let an excursion steamer go through the Gate ahead of him. "Did you put both of them in that drum before you dropped it over, Wainwright? Or only the chef?"

"No one saw anyone put anything overside from my boat, Admiral. No one ever saw the boy or the chef on my boat. You talk foolish. Even if you're mistaken enough to think we sank something in that twenty-fathom hole off North Brother, you ought to know if anything *did* happen to go down there, that'd be the last you'd ever hear of it."

Something white swirled in an eddy a few yards to starboard. Koski fished for it with a boathook—a coarse paper sack still afloat, the air caught under a bulge where black letters said:

*KWIK-ZET*
INSTANT CEMENT
"Sets In a Jiffy"

Koski laid it carefully on the grappling-iron locker. "I don't know," —he regarded Wainwright dispassionately; "maybe you will hear some more about it."

IN the *Scalawag's* deckhouse, Ray stood stiffly at the wheel, staring off to starboard at the lights of the Jersey shore.

The radio fizzed and crackled:

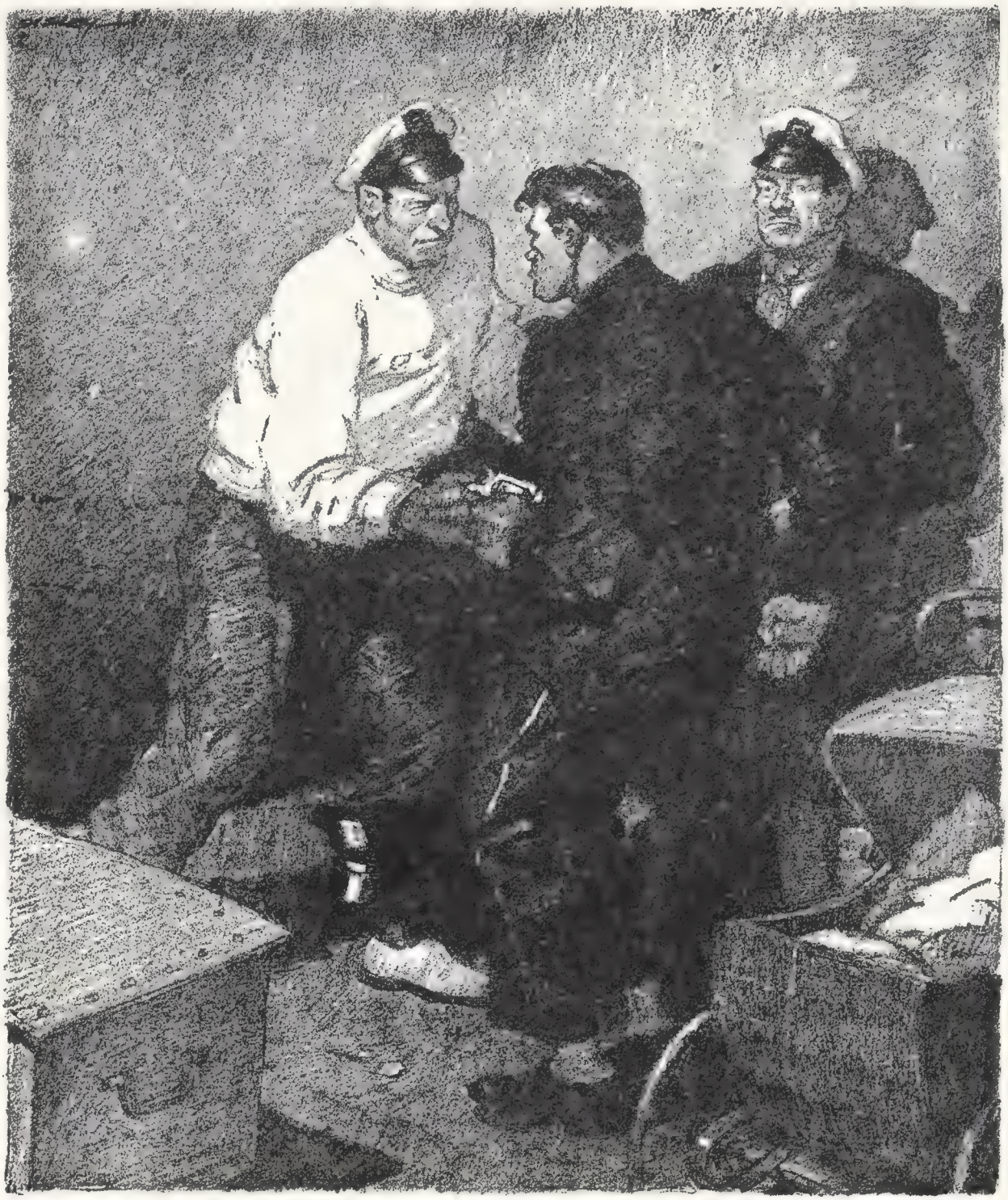
*"Navy minesweepers with detectors now operating over area have blinker signaled a find."*

Ray snarled: "Bad enough to listen to you, Mick. Do I have to stand that guff too?"

Mulcahey shrugged ponderously. "They're tryin' to locate that drum you heaved over. That oughtn't to bother you. You claim there was only a snaggle of old heater pipe in it."

The engineer mumbled unintelligibly.

"To me," Mulcahey said, "you'd contaminate a garbage incinerator. But maybe to you, you're worth savin'. All you got to do is tell what your prissy partner did with the kid. That's simple, isn't it?"



*"Grab your ears, cop. We got no time to wrassle you around."*

"Hell with you!"

Beneath the George Washington bridge, the disembodied voice of the shortwave spoke again:

*"Salvage tug Nestor has grab hooks down on drag chains."*

"Yah—h—h!" Ray mocked. "They couldn't get all that equipment there that fast. Who they think they're ribbin'?"

"I dunno. There was all them navy repair boats off Randall's tryin' to dredge up that jet job that cracked near Port Morris. They could've been there in twenty minutes." Mulcahey sucked his teeth noisily. "About this Sweetie Pie, nobody's gonna feel so bad. He wasn't an American citizen, first place. Second place, he wasn't even a good Britisher, smugglin' in—what was it you thought he'd packed in the drum to begin with?"

"Nuts!"

Mulcahey nodded.

"Yeah. Well, anyhow—the Prosecutor won't sweat himself into a lather over Sweetie. But with this boy, it's different. So any time you want to wag your jaw about *him*—"

"A fine, fat chance."

They were on West Twenty-third Street where the ferries loaded with after-theater suburbanites swam across in stately incandescence, when the zombie voice on the loud-speaker became audible over the static once more:

*". . . . brought up one oil drum, marked Ramshead, filled with cement. Pursuant to instructions, drum will be brought to Randall's Island station of the Marine Division for further examination."*

RAY breathed heavily like a man who has climbed too many steps too fast.

"Ah-h-h! I don't fall for that mahaha!"

"I just hope the kid isn't in that block of cee-ment along with this Dendon. You'll find out what a forty-thousand-volt hotfoot feels like."

"I never had a thing to do with it," the engineer shouted, incensed. "You can't prove different."

"Too late to start yawping about that." Mulcahey stuck out his lower lip. "They got the evidence now. If you'd talked in time to be of any help, maybe the Lieutenant would have gone to bat for you. But—"

"It ain't too late! That damn brat'll starve to death under that coal wharf! Nobody'd ever find him there! But I didn't want to leave him there, to begin with. It was Wainwright's idea. Like he got the idea of buryin' Sweetie in his own drum."

Mulcahey pressed the horn button long and hard.

The *Vigilant* slowed. . . . The towline slacked. . . .

The boy sat on the rear step of the ambulance while the doctor worked on his ears. His face was swollen, and the lips were puffy; his eyes were still dark with remembered horror.

Koski squatted beside him, a tangle of adhesive tape at his feet. "They stuck cotton in your ears so you couldn't hear and stuff in your mouth so you couldn't make a noise. Really had it rough, didn't you!"

"Yes sir." Hal rubbed the welts on his wrists. "The worst part was not knowing."

"Always is, son."

"I didn't know why they were keeping me on their rotten ol' boat. Or why they were so excited about the blamed drum and the musk. . . . I never even heard of that before."

"It's something that stinks to heaven, fella. Sweetish, but kind of sickish too. Makes you think of a crowd in a movie or the subway."

"I know what you mean—"

"After you add some stuff to it, it gets to be perfume, sells for fancy prices in the stores. But to begin with it's a kind of jelly packed in jars. These birds were trying to smuggle in about a hundred and fifty thousand dollars' worth, to save fifty thousand bucks on duties. Guess they thought you knew what had happened to it, when they found there weren't any jars of musk in the drum."

"They were awful mad." The boy shrank from the doctor's touch at his ear. "They kept talking about somebody named Sweetie."

"We know about Sweetie," Koski said. "He worked on a big liner. They gave him money to buy all this musk and fixed it so he'd pack it in the drum and push it overboard into the harbor where they could find it. But he double-crossed them, took the money and didn't buy the musk. Then he pretended to put something in the oil drum, because he was afraid maybe they had someone watching him."

"Gee!" Hal fingered one corner of his mouth where the gag had cut it. "But if he was going to let them find the barrel anyway, wouldn't they know they'd been cheated?"

"That's one I can't answer," Koski was frank. "Only way I can figure it, he must have weighted the drum so he thought it would sink and never come up—and then something happened, and it did float up—and you found it."

"There was a rope around it, when I swam to it—a long rope tied right around the middle. The loose end of it was all chewed up, sort of."

"As if a ship's propellor had cut it? That might have been it, son. But it must have puzzled the men on the *Scalawag* until they doped it out."

"They thought I had something to do with it. Kept asking me if I knew this Sweetie, whoever he was—if I was related to him. And they kept punching me and slapping me, too." Tears came into the red-rimmed eyes, but he fought them back. "They broke my glasses—"

"I know. I found a piece of one on their boat. Never mind. We'll get you a new pair." Koski knuckled him gently. "First thing is to get you home so your folks will know you're really all right."

"WELL, gee!" The boy frowned. "You said it had been on the radio—how I'd been found and everything—Mom won't be worrying any more!"

"She might," Koski said. "Lots of people don't believe all they hear on the radio, you know."

Mulcahey coughed to cover a snort. "Not all they hear on the shortwave, for a fact. All that mahooly you were spieling off to the dispatcher from the *Vigilant* so he could broadcast it back to the *Scalawag*—for an audience of one. If ever you wish to quit scuttling around one kind of waves, you could get a job telling tall tales on the other, Steve. Minesweepers and salvage tugs and hundred-foot grabchains! 'Twill be a long day before the Marine Division lets you forget that."

"Wainwright's likely to remember it for a little while, too," Koski said. "How about heading for Staten Island, son?"

The boy turned to look at the green flag fluttering over the *Vigilant*.

"Gee! I always wanted to ride on a police boat. I wonder if Mom'll be down at the dock to see us come in?"

## MAINLY MASCULINE

**STATISTIC. A man's hair grows 75 per cent faster in the peak of summer than in the depth of winter.**

* * *

**IT HAPPENED IN OSHKOSH. R. J. Stritzel, Oshkosh fisherman, was trolling Lake Winnebago when he noticed a doe swimming offshore. He rowed over, grabbed the deer by the tail and towed it to shore.**

* * *

**INTRIGUE. In London, two men were arrested for trying to buy gold from a supposed black-marketeer. The black-marketeer turned out to be a police inspector. But the two arrested men also were released. They turned out to be police inspectors masquerading as black-market operators.**

**EN GARDE! EN GARDE! As if one wasn't enough, a swordfish with two swords was caught (appropriately enough) in the Bay of Plenty, New Zealand.**

* * *

**DENTAL DOINGS. A patient walked into the office of a Danville, Ill., dentist to have a tooth pulled, but stubbornly refused an anesthetic. "I've been drunk every time I've had a tooth pulled so far and I'm not going to change now," he stated adamantly.**

* * *

**THE NEW WEST. Unable to complete a call on a pay phone, a man in Missoula, Mont., pulled out a gun and shot up the booth.**

***—by Bruce Hancock***

# Sail Against Oars

...from "A briefe Relation of the notable service performed by Sir Francis Drake..etc. To be read at large in Richard Hakluyt's "Principall Navigations of the English Nation." Here set out & decorated by an ink-stained wretch of a gallie slave:

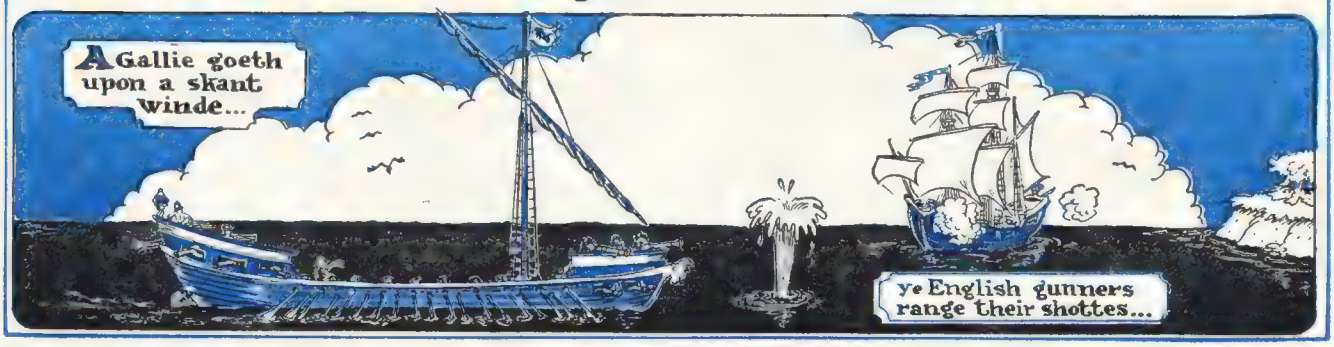
**Peter Wells**

AD 1586

After {*we left Cadiz*} ten of the Gallies that were in the Road came out, as it were in disdaine of us, to make some pastime with their ordinance, at which time the wind skanted upon us, whereupon we cast about againe, and stood in with the shoare & came to anker within a league of the towne; where the said Gallies, for all their former bragging, at length suffred us to ride quietly.

We now have had experience of Gally-fight: wherein I can assure you, that onely these 4 of her Majesties ships will make no accompt of 20. Gallies, if they may be alone, and not busied to guard others. There were never Gallies that had better place and fitter opportunitie for their advantage to fight with ships: but they were still forced to retire, wee riding in a narrow gut, the place yeelding no better, and driven to maintaine the same, until wee had bothe discharged and fired the shippes, which could not conveniently be done but upon the Flood, at which time they might drive cleare of us. Thus being victualed with bread and wine at the enemies cost for divers moneths {besides the provisions that we brought from home} our Generall dispatched Captaine Crosse into England with his letters, giving him further in charge to declare unto her Majestie all the particularities of this our first enterprize.

After whose departure we shaped our course toward Cape Sacre, and in the way thither wee tooke at severall times of ships, barkes, and Caravels well neere an hundred, laden with hoopes, gally-oares, pipe-staves, & other provisions of the King of Spaine, for the furnishing of his forces intended against England, al which we burned, having delt favorably with the men and sent them on shoare...



# The Meek Shall

*"Captain Lamb, I have no respect for a man who panders to heathen superstitions."*

THERE were not enough chairs, and so only the females sat, the men standing gravely behind them. It was good that the men did not squat on their heels. It was one of the things about the Islands that had most amazed Ann Mathewson—how nobody ever sat down. That they had never known the chair seemed more astounding than the fact that until recently they had never even known the wheel, or metal. She supposed, coming to think of it, that three-quarters of the folks in the world never used a chair. All the same, it kept right on being extraordinary. Ann was only twenty; yet with all her heart she longed for a good old-fashioned Connecticut rocker.

She was glad that the men of the Family never consented to squat. It was better to stand than to squat. It was more dignified. She had seen white men here, mercantile men—and notably that unspeakable Johnny Lamb—who would hunker down with the natives at any time and in any place, chatting. It might help their popularity, she supposed. It could hardly be held to help their souls.

As though by instinct they all turned to Hiram Bingham, who stood

# Inherit *the* Islands

WHEN HAWAII WAS A KINGDOM, AND THE MISSIONARIES CONTENDED WITH CAROUSING WHALERS FOR THE BEWILDERED NATIVES.

*by* DONALD BARR CHIDSEY

apart. He was not large and surely not handsome; but intensity of purpose, loud in his deep-set dark eyes, made him a magnet. They could frighten, those eyes. They could chill. They never relaxed.

Ann Mathewson was quietest in all that quiet group, for she knew that the meeting, a special one, was being held because of her.

Some sailors were coming from the beach. They sounded drunk. Members of the Family, without looking at one another, hoped that this wouldn't mean a stoning. The Lord's Anointed, firm, could endure with no answer jeers and coarse taunts, but understandably they did not like to be pelted with rotten fruit, still less with chunks of coral. "We come twenty thousand miles to a land of naked savages," said Lucy Thurston once, in the only bitterness Ann Mathewson had ever heard her voice, "and who insults us and threatens us? Our next-door neighbors from back home." It was true. The whalers were largely Massachusetts or Connecticut men.

What the Anointed most feared, though, was that a mob would set fire to the mission hut. This was made of sticks and grass, a haystack from the outside, inside a drafty, muggy, floorless barn. One spark would have set the whole thing ablaze, destroying every article they had so carefully carried around the Horn. Ann Mathewson, all of them, had seen native huts go up in flames. Five or six minutes of fierce heat and glare—and nothing would be left but smoke in suspension over the smoldering ashes.

They had a house of their own, brought all this distance, a proper white clapboard house—still, however, in sections. The King, even when sober, would not grant them permission to put it together. They had started to dig a foundation—and instantly the rumor had spread that they were planning a storage space for gunpowder, the beginnings of a fort from out of which they would later sally to take over the Islands. It was sheer malice, that rumor. It was incredible that anybody could believe it. Certainly the King, who despite his habits, was no fool, this Liholiho, this Kamehameha II, did not believe it. The King must have known that it was no more than a trick on the part of the traders, who hated the Lord's Anointed for trying to enforce the Sabbath, for trying to prohibit rum. Nevertheless the King would not grant permission for them to put up their house; and they continued to live and worship in this vulnerable, disgusting rickle of tinder.

Now the Reverend Mr. Bingham told them about the ship.

It was a tall Indiaman, the finest they had seen here, and newly arrived. The skipper, Captain Strook, so said Hiram Bingham, was a man of God, who had praised what he saw and had promised to praise it again when he returned to Boston, where he would seek out members of the ABCFM and make a point of telling them of the work the Family was doing. Meanwhile Captain Strook would be glad to carry back any letters—or any passengers.

At this point a lesser man might have cleared his throat; but the Reverend Mr. Bingham had never suffered from any sort of nervous habit, and now he looked right at Ann.

"Sister Mathewson, in your bereavement we have been chary of troubling you. Your services have been great, and you have been devout and uncomplaining. Surely nobody could object if, your helpmeet having been drawn back to the bosom of God, you separate from us now and accept passage on this reputable vessel."

Ann shook her head. "No," she said. "I'm going to stay here."

It flabbergasted them all, even Ann herself. Her husband had died four days out, exactly six days after their marriage. Since the day they had slid the youth she scarcely knew into the grim green cold sea, Ann had sensed that something would be said about sending her back, it being the policy of the Society that only married persons should labor in the field. A whaler was out of the question. No respectable female would have anything to do with a whaler; even if her nose could endure it, and her stomach, assuredly her reputation couldn't. And what fur traders put in at Honolulu were for the most part heading west for the Orient, and seeking only sandalwood and supplies.

So she had known what was coming. She had been certain when she saw that Indiaman in the harbor, that there would be a special meeting.

*"Would you expect me to like a man who sends a woman to do his dirty work for him?"*

What she had not known was that she would have the temerity to defy Reverend Mr. Bingham. It was not customary here.

He came to her. He put a hand on her shoulder.

"Sister Mathewson, I do not know what the others think, but for myself I implore you to consider this carefully."

"I have. I'm going to stay."

The hand tightened. The voice was low and resonant.

"Sister, there is no shame in turning back when the finger of the Lord has so clearly pointed the way. It is because of no fault of yours that we here, all of us, find ourselves begging you to embrace this opportunity to take back a report of our work."

"Captain Strook, or whatever his name is, can do that."

"Not the way you could, Sister."

Ann shook her head again.

"I'm going to stay here."

She wondered why the Reverend Mr. Bingham was being so stubborn. He ought to have been able to see that she had not the slightest intention of changing her mind. He stepped away, and with arms raised, and in a low trembling voice, he asked them all if they would pray with him for guidance from Heaven in the decision Sister Mathewson was obliged to make. Just stubborn, that was what he was, Ann thought angrily. She got down on her knees. They all did.

Mr. Bingham prayed in a low, even, slow-paced voice. It was a moving prayer. His prayers always were.

Most of the time there was only the sound of his voice and that of buzzing flies. Some sailors came to the doorway, where they said a few half-heartedly scoffing things. They seemed awed by the scene in spite of themselves. Suddenly one of them cursed and threw something soft that skittered across the mats and came to rest in front of Ann. She saw that it was a banana peel; she had her eyes a little open all the while. The sailors laughed and went away. The Reverend Mr. Bingham prayed on.

After they had risen, Ann took the banana peel and dropped it daintily under her stool. She waited with folded hands.

"Sister Mathewson, did our petition bring you any light?"

"No."

Nobody knew better than the mission's leader that humility and resignation were cardinal virtues. He had never been heard to sniff or snort; he had trained himself over the years never to show exasperation or disgust. Even his mouth did not twitch now, though it tightened a trifle. He turned away, a man crushed.

After a moment he started again:

"Sister, it must seem to you that we are plaguing you cruelly."

He was not conscious of using the regal plural. He believed with all his heart that he really was speaking for everybody there excepting Ann herself. In all matters, great and small, it was his habit to canvass the opinions of the others; but the final decision was always what he had wanted it to be. He was an utter tyrant—and utterly unaware of the fact.

"But, Sister Mathewson—"

The sunset gun spoke at the fort. You never could be sure of that gun. Sometimes they fired it and sometimes they didn't. It was a symbol rather than an announcement of time. The whole whaling fleet was in, and the hour itself was multitudinously made known by the bells of the ships. The sunset gun was a sound the chiefs liked to hear, an assertion of power. Sometimes the merest "pip," at other times it roared. Tonight it was particularly loud and sudden. The hut shook. The flies buzzed higher. The insects in the thatch fell silent.

"Sister Mathewson," went on the man who had been disturbed not nearly so much by the explosion of a cannon as by one touch of opposition to his authority, "could you perhaps find it in your heart to tell us *why* you insist upon remaining?"

"Certainly," said Ann. "I'd be glad to tell you."

It was dark in the hut now. Tapa mallets no longer thudded outside, and there was only the faintest sound of roistering from the beach. Ann started abruptly:

"My duty here is not yet done. Please! I am not talking about the school. As I see it, I have a special duty."

She waggled a forefinger at them. They could not see this—night comes with a rush in the tropics—but it heartened her all the same.

"We are failing—let's admit it. We've been here half a year, and we haven't made a single convert. If there is less idleness, there's more lewdness. If there are fewer games and dances, there is more violence. We have been an unmitigated failure, so far."

She paused only a moment, wetting her lips. Had she paused longer, she would have broken down.

"We were greatly favored when we came and found all the old heathen gods overthrown. But the natives don't seem to be looking for any new ones. They stumble—but they spurn the hand we offer them. The truth is, they don't *want* to be led. They want to be driven."

Amid a rusty rustle of clothes, the voice of Asa Thurston came, pained: "But surely, Sister, this is the opposite to all we stand for. Our Lord Jesus was a shepherd, remember."

"I am not likely to forget it. But shepherds have to drive their flocks sometimes as well as lead them. Now, please! Let me finish. I do not suggest that *we* push these people. They'd only laugh. No, it's their own chiefs who should drive them, the way they always have. And who drives the chiefs? The highest chief—the King. Liholiho. And of course the dowager Kaahumanu."

"I have prayed for them personally." This was Hiram Bingham. "We all have. Many times."

"Perhaps that's not enough. It may be that the Lord in His wisdom prefers to have us use more direct action. It would certainly seem so. Now look: who is it knows Kaahumanu best, so well that some folks say that—well—I don't believe for a moment that such a thing could be, but undoubtedly he has great influence on her. He's the only *haole* she really trusts. And as for the King, who sells him rum—and sits by the hour drinking it with him. You all know that I mean Johnny Lamb."

She felt her face hot, and was grateful for the darkness.

"The ways of God are inscrutable. It comes to this: To win the people, we have to win the chiefs; to win the chiefs we have to win Kaahumanu and Liholiho; and to win *them*, we have to win Captain Lamb. Isn't that right?"

She dropped her hands, one on each knee, triumphant. There was for a time silence. Then Hiram Bingham spoke.

"This has been most illuminating. But you forget that we have prayed for the soul of Captain Lamb too, and without avail."

"Well, he's a worldly man. Let's approach him in a worldly manner. Here is the reason why I should remain:

"I will go to Johnny Lamb. I know him. This is hard to explain. . . . It will sound prideful. . . . There is nobody else here from Hartford, which makes it even harder. Well, anyway, I was born Ann Buttoner. We live on Prospect Street. The Lambs live down by the river. There is all the difference in the world, as anybody from Hartford could tell you. I will go to Johnny Lamb, and I will tell him to forbid those girls from swimming naked out to the ships, to stop selling rum, and to instruct the sailors that they are not to molest us.

"He's a brute, but he'll listen to a Buttoner. He's the biggest bullyboy on the beach, and he can do anything he wants with them down there, and anything he wants at the palace too. But he'll mind me—because I'm from Prospect Street. He knows that."

They crowded softly around her, feeling for her hand, murmuring thanks. There was no doubt that they'd been impressed. A new spirit had come to the Family.

When would Sister Mathewson go to this man?

"Right now. Or at least, right after supper."

Though they said little, they were eager and excited, filled with wild hope. They had not until this evening realized how rutted they'd been, how discouraged. This bold new plan exhilarated them.

When supper was over, Ann Mathewson got her shawl, which she fastened with a plain pin. She wished she had the cameo she'd given away when she married Jabez Mathewson. She had no jewelry at all now.

"I'm going."

But—*not at night!*

"God watches over us at night as well as in the daytime."

"But—but Johnny Lamb lives down on the beach!"

"In Hartford he lived down by the river—and I lived on Prospect Street. No harm will come to me. Don't worry."

She did not begin to feel frightened until she had gone at least ten steps. Her way was not literally down, for the mission was on the same level as the village of Honolulu and about a mile from it, on the path to Waikiki; but she distinctly had the feeling of descent: it almost seemed to her that the air grew warmer as she walked. This could have been her imagination. She had never before been to the beach alone, even in daytime.

The name would mislead a mainlander, would have misled Ann herself at home. There was no sand, no gentle slope or place for swimming or picnics. By "the beach" in any Pacific island town, is meant what elsewhere would be called the waterfront. To some it is a rialto, a place of business; to others a place of deplorable pleasure; to many it is both.

The beach at Honolulu when the whaling fleet rode at anchor in the fall of 1820 was not a garish place. It wasn't bright. It was noisy, but not in the least gay.

The roads there, or lanes, were mere passages among the huts, ankle-deep in dust or mud, depending on the weather. There was no common, no central square or plaza. The huts were dull, bleached, shapeless, dirty. Girls lounged in the doorways of many of them. A few of these girls dived back into full darkness when they saw Ann; a few spat; but most of them only giggled. Ann's heart bled for them all. She kept her face straight ahead, and walked in the middle of the road.

There were some shored-up huts, which though still floorless, were in part constructed of something besides thatch. Odd boards had been used, and odd beams, bits from different ships, or driftwood. These places had doors, if flimsy ones, unlike the "boarding houses," where there were only openings. These were the "cafés." They were lighted, more or less. A great deal of noise came from them.

From one, as Ann approached it, hurtled a small sailor with cap awry. His shirt was ripped half off, and blood streamed down one of his arms. Three men came bounding out after him, each with a bare sheath-knife. Running, they disappeared into the darkness, the way he had gone. A moment later there were screams from that direction: but these were cut off.

Some silence fell then for a little while. The hum of talk, the singing, ceased. But nobody came to a doorway.

The three men returned, wiping their knives on their breeches. They did not speak to one another, and none of them noticed Ann. Grimly but precisely, in single file, as though they had rehearsed it, as though they were doing a drill, they went back into the café.

Ann moved on. She was shaky in the legs, and had considered turning and running back to the mission house. She might have done this had she not become aware that she was being followed.

She stopped; the footsteps stopped. She looked back but could see nothing. She started again, and the footsteps started again.

There was a man back there in the shadows, and he was a white man. She could not see him, but he wore shoes—the natives, men and women alike, never made a sound when they walked.

If she broke into a run, he would run after her. She walked a little faster, holding her head high.

A man came out of a café and saw her, and gasped. He was very drunk. He cried "Oh, my!" and lurched toward her, but tripped and fell on his hands and knees. He reached for her skirt as she passed him, but she easily slipped by.

She could hear the footsteps behind her again.

Then came four sailors from the opposite direction, and they all saw her at once, and stopped. "Well, blow me down! It's one of the Long Necks!" They spread themselves across the lane. "Let's see what she looks like without any clothes on," said one. "You reckon they're put together just the same way as other women?"

She might have screamed, but what would a scream mean here? There was no law in Honolulu, literally.

What she did was better. A moment before the appearance of these men, she had seen Johnny Lamb's house on the left just beyond where they stood now. It was easy to identify, even in the darkness, being the only two-story structure in town.

Now she walked directly toward the sailors, making a scornful gesture as though to brush them aside, treating them like cobwebs.

"Excuse me," she said coldly. "I have an appointment with a real man. You wouldn't want me to call out to Captain Lamb that you were trying to prevent me from reaching his door, would you?"

The name was magic, and they fell away—but not far. They closed in behind her, ready to grab her if she turned.

Johnny Lamb's door brought a lump to her throat. It was a dark glossy green, and might have come straight from Hartford—probably had. There was a prim brass plate with the name Lamb, and a brass knocker in the shape of an American eagle.

She used the knocker.

The door was opened by the biggest native she had ever seen. She recognized him from descriptions—Humuhumunukunukuapuaa, the *mokomoko* fighter, as familiar a figure on the beach as the man he served so slavishly.

No intellectual, Humu looked at her dumfounded. Ann Mathewson gave him a smile and walked in.

The upstairs windows had been lighted, and light streamed down a stairway. Ann was in a store. She went upstairs.

There was one large room, lighted by a whale-oil lamp on a low table. Captain Lamb sat in an old-fashioned rocking chair. His feet, in slippers, were high on a stool. He wore a stunning dragon-brocaded silk smoking-robe, obviously from China, very rich, glistening and flashing with colors. There was a drink at his elbow, a cigar in his mouth. He was reading.

He stood up.

"Oh, hello. Come right in."

She thought, furious: *He acts as if he is accustomed to receiving ladies alone after dark.*

But her anger melted, and she all but wanted to cry, when he offered her the rocking chair. He shoved it forward, pushed the stool back. He whisked away the drink and a seashell he had been using for cigar ashes. The cigar itself he started to crush out, then changed his mind. He went to the trapdoor and softly called Humu, who appeared head-and-shoulders out of the opening, for all the world like a jinni at the rubbing of a lamp. The Captain handed him the lighted cigar, and the giant popped it into his mouth, and sank, seemingly by a miracle, out of sight.

Johnny Lamb returned to the center of the room. He stood with feet wide-spread, his hands deep in the pockets of his smoking-robe. Tall and rangy, he teetered on his heels. He was big, but there was no fat on him. He was all a-taunto, as a sailor would have said: nothing about him dragged or sagged; nothing was loose. He balanced on a thick-corded neck a head that was long and thin. His ears were small, his eyes light blue. His mouth was long and thin, in repose granitic, but it smiled easily: it was faintly smiling now, as his head was a little cocked. His bushy brows and the hair of his head was something between brown and yellow, bleached by the sun, though in certain lights it might have been thought red; it was short and stiff.

"No trouble at the Mission, I hope?" he asked.

She didn't answer, but rocked back and forth, reveling in the motion. She had fixed upon an attack, but it could wait until she got used to the feel of this luxurious chamber—just as, when you enter a dim place, you must wait for your eyes to adjust themselves. There were many mats on the teakwood floor—good mats, *lauhalas* and *makalous* mostly, thick ones. The table was made of koa wood. There were four or five *umekes,* or jars, also of polished koa; and from them all sorts of flowers protruded, perfuming the air. Over the bed, itself not remarkable except for its great size, had been thrown an exquisite Spanish shawl. On the whitewashed walls hung pieces of brocade, rich and bright. Near her elbow, on the table, was a set of carved ivory chessmen, mandarins, pagodas, coolies, fragile objects, much too lovely, certainly, to be played with.

It was the first time Ann Mathewson had ever been in a man's bedroom, though this did seem to be a parlor as well. Rocking, she glanced up. She did not like the way he was looking at her.

"Haven't I seen you somewhere before?"

"Could be. I've been to the palace."

"No, I mean home."

"Certainly: I am Mrs. Mathewson. I used to be Ann Buttoner."

"Oh, sure. Say, of course! So you're Mrs. Mathewson now, eh? Hartford boy? Would I know him?"

"Jabez Mathewson. He lived on Prospect Street too."

"Not *that* little rabbit? A gal like you?"

*She knew what they were saying about her and Johnny. . . . She knew, and didn't care.*

"Captain Lamb, you are speaking of the man who was my husband."

"Well, I'll be swouched!" Then he remembered a word, and squinted at her.

"'*Was*'?" he repeated.

She swallowed, and was glad to lower her eyes.

"He knew the call to convert the heathen, but the Society insisted that all sent should be married. I knew how much it meant to him. So I—I married him. It was only two days before they were to sail. He died on board ship."

It was quiet in the room; outside, in the harbor, the bells of the ships began to speak, ringing twice for nine o'clock, now one bell, then another and another, some harsh, some sweet, high ones, low ones. The echoes lingered for a long while.

"Say, I'm sorry. I didn't mean that. Reckon he wasn't so bad after all. I didn't know him well, really."

"You wouldn't be likely to."

"Reckon that's right. Won't you—uh—take your poke off?"

She did so deliberately, untying it with slow hands. It was a plain poke, all untrimmed, the only one she had now.

"I suppose you wonder what I'm doing here?" she said evenly.

"No trouble at the Mission, I hope?" he said again.

She smoothed her skirt with hands that didn't tremble.

"No, there's nothing wrong at the Mission. We haven't been doing the work we'd hoped to do—but that's only because we've been blocked by certain commercial interests here on the beach."

He had been crossing the room, the poke in both hands, and he stopped and turned his head. She rocked gently, watching him through her eyelashes. A man shouldn't look at you that way.

"People who have more regard for their pocketbooks than they do for the immortal souls of the unfortunates among whom they find themselves," she added hastily.

He said, "Oh!" and continuing the trip to the bed, he put the bonnet down carefully, patting it.

"For instance," she said, "there's those poor pitiful creatures who swim out to the ships—with no clothes on at all."

He came back to the middle of the room, and sat on the stool, facing her. He nodded slowly. His hands were on his knees.

"So it was business you came here on, eh?"

She bristled.

"You certainly don't think it was for any other reason, do you?"

"I didn't know. I asked, that's all."

She did not think that he ought to sit down in her presence. She frowned; for the interview was not going as she had plotted it. Johnny Lamb was young, in his middle twenties, but he had seen a heap of the world Almost daily he drank with a king; and it was said that he slept with a queen—but Ann refused to think about that. Anyway, it looked as if he wasn't impressed any more by the mention of Prospect Street.

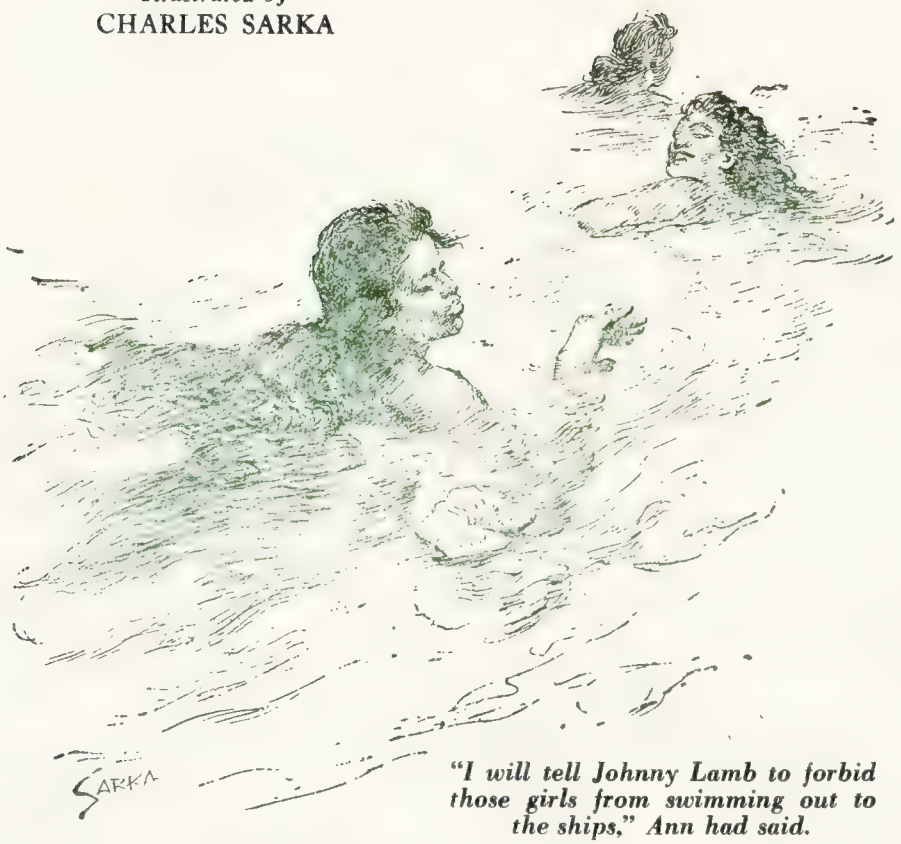
"Then the selling of rum. That should be stopped."

He opened his eyes very wide.

"Rum represents a good share of my income. You wouldn't prevent a man from earning his living, would you?"

Ann sniffed loudly. As though wakened by the sound, a small black pig rose from a corner, stretched, yawned, and trotted sleepily to Johnny Lamb, whose ankles it rubbed against. He scratched its spine, smiling distantly, then scooped it up and with a bob of apology took it to the trapdoor. He called the giant, whose upper half appeared, smoking a cigar, and handed him the piglet.

*Illustrated by*
CHARLES SARKA




***"I will tell Johnny Lamb to forbid those girls from swimming out to the ships," Ann had said.***

"I suppose Kaahumanu gave you that?" Ann said.

"Matter of fact, she did, yes. But getting back to business, you know of course that there's no law against liquor here?"

"There's the law of God!"

"'Tis variously interpreted."

"You should not mock it!"

"I haven't mocked it, ma'am. All I meant was that I'd rather hear the voice of God direct than take Hiram Bingham's word for it."

"You don't like the Reverend Mr. Bingham?"

"Not very much. Would you expect me to like a man who sends a woman to do his dirty work for him?"

She sat upright, slamming her hands on the arms of the chair.

"Now just what do you mean by that, Captain?"

"Could there be the slightest doubt of what I meant?"

She rose, a ramrod.

"I'm going to leave!"

"You're welcome to stay as long as you like. You won't get what you were sent for, of course. But why not sit around and act like folks for a while? *I'm* enjoying the visit. It's been a long time since I've talked to anybody from Hartford."

"I'm going."

But her hand on the table jarred the book he had been reading, and when she straightened this, she saw what it was; and she gasped. The book was open. Incredulous still, needing to hear her own voice say the words in order to bring belief, like a woman in a dream she read: "The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen!'"

"'Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of somewhere or other; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph,'" he finished, with a fond grin. "Then there's that part a little farther on, where it says something about the shield of the mighty being vilely cast away. I always liked that. *Vilely* cast away—"

"You—you read this?"

"Oh, yes. I was taught to read, you know. I went to school."

There was in his voice a high thin penetrating *ping* of mockery, an overtone, very faint, but insistent, like the tapping of a tine of a tuning fork; but his face was grave.

"You—you sit in a heathen kimono, and drink rum, and smoke a cigar, and pet a pig—*and* read the Book!"

"It's very easy to do all those things at once, Miss Buttoner. Don't take as much practice as you might think."

"Captain Lamb, my astonishment may be very amusing, but you can certainly grant that it's justified. After all, you *are* an ungodly man."

"Because Hiram Bingham says so?"

"You can't deny that you sell rum, and gamble, and permit your men to work on the Sabbath, and tolerate rowdyism and prostitution."

"I don't have anything to do with prostitution."

"You don't deny that it exists here?"

"Of course not. It will exist in any seaport, naturally. But that ain't part of my concern."

"Maybe not the *legal* responsibility, but the *moral* responsibility is yours."

He shrugged.

"Well, I won't argufy with you. Most of these whaler men only understand one language, and I sure know how to talk it to them." He stared at the backs of his hands, as though he had never seen them before. They were clean, lean, bony, and very large. They were brushed with light yellow freckles. They looked incalculably strong. "Reckon I do have more influence in this part of town than anybody else. Leastways I can't think of anybody here I can't whip—except one man, and he works for me." He chuckled. "If you can't lick 'em, hire 'em, eh? Here he comes now."

They heard footsteps on the stairs, and Captain Lamb went over and took the piglet from the mighty hands of Humu, who thereupon jack-in-the-boxed out of sight again.

Johnny Lamb held the little pig in the crook of his left arm, and stroked it behind the ears. The pig whuffled softly; and when he put it down, it flumped in its corner, belly and chin, and lay looking up at him.

He smiled at Ann.

"I call it Clarissa. They're very easy to housebreak, you know."

He was not looking at Ann, which was just as well, for she felt her face go hot.

"I wonder why folks back home don't have pigs for pets, instead of dogs. Give 'em half a chance, and they'll keep themselves clean. They eat anything. They're quiet. They're affectionate. Clarissa, here, follows me everywhere—even tries to go in after me when I go swimming, though she's scared to death of the water."

"You don't like dogs?"

"Oh, I reckon I do. I never really knew a dog. Wasn't allowed to have one when I was a boy. And you can't have a dog at sea. And of course nobody could think much of these mutts here. All they keep 'em for is to eat."

She winced.

"I—I actually ate part of one once. I didn't know it at the time, of course. It makes me sick whenever I think about it."

Johnny Lamb grinned.

"Oh, I've eaten dog lots of times. You just take a swig of gin and keep on talking, that's all. It ain't bad."

He squatted to tickle the pig's ears, and Ann noticed how easy he was in

that position, with no self-consciousness. He always had got along well with the natives, no doubt because it flattered them to have a white man stoop to their practices. Eating dog, indeed! Clarissa grunted blissfully and rolled her eyes.

"What I'd really like is a cat, but you can't get one here for love or money."

"You've tried both?"

"I know skippers'll give you anything you ask—give you the shirt off their back—only don't try to get the ship's cat from them. Maybe it's superstition, I don't know. Maybe they're afraid of a mutiny. Hands'll take almost anything—short grub, floggings, wet quarters—but if you swipe the ship's cat, you're in for trouble!"

Only with difficulty did Ann Mathewson resist an impulse to snicker. The strain caused her voice, when she did speak, to sound harsh.

"There are many unexpected things about you, Captain, but I think the strangest of all is that you read the Good Book and yet refuse to practice it."

He had been enjoying this interview, a lonesome man glad to have somebody to talk with; but now he rose, and she could see that he was angry. The atmosphere of the room had changed.

"That's the trouble with you missionaries. You think the Bible's your own personal property. Religion mustn't be what a man thinks about in his heart and soul. No, it must be just what you ladle out, nothing more and nothing less. If it doesn't come from the Bingham factory, it just ain't the authentic stuff."

He was striding up and down, windmilling his arms. And Ann was sorry. She waited, turning away a little.

"Because I smoke means of course that I shouldn't read Second Samuel. Because I like liquor means I'm a depraved monster. Because I treat prostitutes like human beings means that I'm a pimp. Fine dirty-minded lot you are, you missionaries!"

In anguish she faced away from him, still waiting for him to quiet down; and this brought before her a portion of the room she had not previously seen. Rage flared inside of her, to match his rage.

Grinning down from its pole, propped in a corner, was the great battle god Kukailimoku. Though palpably a constructed article, made of wickerwork, human hair, yellowed sharks' teeth, feathers, daubs of painted mud, it affected her like something alive and indescribably hideous, a crawling animal, a glittering slithering snake. The eyes, though empty, were uptilted and seemed to express a fiendish rage. Worst of all was the mouth, which was wide and voracious: it looked as though it ought to be slobbered with blood, as no doubt it more than once had been.

Whirling, she confronted Johnny Lamb.

"Throw that thing out! I won't allow you to keep it!"

He stopped, pop-eyed.

"It's indecent—it's sacrilegious! I suppose your friend Kaahumanu gave you that too?"

He said in a low bitter voice: "I still fail to see what the Queen has to do with this matter. Well, no. . . . Wait—I guess I do, at that. . . . The idea is to get her into the fold, eh? She'd take care of the rest. And by God, she would, too! She'd drive 'em to church with a horsewhip! But when you try a direct approach, she laughs, right? So the idea is to get *me* to put the bit in her teeth. That means *I've* got to be won over first. So Hiram Bingham picks the one good-looking woman in his gang, and he sends her. The trouble is, she messes the job by showing that she's flubbergumped to find me able to read, and by criticizing my taste in decorations. Which ain't the right way to go about it when you want to wheedle something out of somebody, ma'am."

She started toward him, her knees shaky.

"No—no," she whispered, all contrition. "I—I proposed to come here myself. I was lonesome too. It was my idea."

She put her hand on his arm, and he almost jumped. She almost jumped herself. The war god Kukailimoku glared balefully at them, but it was forgotten now. Ann couldn't have moved if her life depended on it. She knew that Johnny Lamb was about to put his arms around her. She didn't know how she knew this, but she did know it. She trembled.

He took a step toward her. Slowly she raised her head.

"Miss Buttoner—Ann—"

There was an outburst from the street—two voices, one a scream, the other booming in an urgent bass: *"Help! Help!"*

Johnny Lamb and Ann Mathewson looked at one another. Then he ran to the trapdoor. "Stay here," he called. He went below.

She disobeyed him promptly, and was only a couple of leaps behind him when he threw open the street door downstairs.

Johnny fisted his hips and threw his head back, and he bellowed with laughter. You could have heard him all over Honolulu.

The mighty Humu, that mountain of a man, had pounced upon a skulker. He held him at arm's-length, while the captive struggled with no effect at all—held him as effortlessly as another man might have held up by its ears a kicking rabbit. He shook him. He screamed to Johnny that he had thought he saw somebody lurking in the shadows a little while ago, when he took Clarissa out, but he had pretended to see nothing then, and had returned to the house and listened. This *haole,* he screamed, had sneaked up to the door. Then he, Humu, had flung the door open and captured the scoundrel.

He shook him. And the Reverend Hiram Bingham flapped his arms and shouted in that fine deep resonant voice: *"Help! Help!"*

It was a full minute before Johnny Lamb could recover himself sufficiently to call a command to the *moko-moko* man, who thereupon dropped his victim. Tut-tutting solicitously, Ann helped him to brush off. So did Johnny Lamb, as well as he was able to for laughing.

"Were you following me?" Ann asked at last.

Reverend Mr. Bingham bowed brittle agreement.

"I couldn't let you come to this ungodly place alone."

"Then it was your footsteps I kept hearing? They scared me half to death."

"You didn't look scared."

"I didn't dare to!"

Reverend Mr. Bingham cleared his throat.

"Captain Lamb, this has been most regrettable. I realize that it was no fault of yours. But it will be all over town tomorrow."

"Sure will," said Johnny. "But I don't mind."

"I wonder if we—uh—if we could induce you to walk back to the Mission with us? It's a beautiful night for a walk."

Johnny's brows drew low; his mouth tightened. Ann went quickly to him and put a hand on his forearm as she had done a little earlier—the same hand, the same arm. "Please," she whispered.

He glowered a moment, then tossed her a grin. "All right."

From everywhere, as they had expected, they were watched. They seldom saw anybody, but they were themselves seen—from behind huts and between huts, from doorways, between spread-apart thatch—and already the word was going around that Johnny himself, Captain Johnny the Lamb, the tightest trader and toughest fighter on the beach, had walked out as calm as you please with the missionaries.

All over the harbor the bells of ships were sprinkling the time.

Captain Johnny, it was noted and eagerly told, had a good grip on the female's arm.

Even those with keenest ears, however, did not know what Ann Mathewson asked the redoubtable Johnny as she thanked him at the Mission house. She asked for the god Kukailimoku, pole and all.

And he looked right at her, and said: "No."

Then he bowed, and said: "Good night, sir. Good night, ma'am." And he put his beaver back on at a cocky angle, and strode away. . . .

She did get a present, though, that she hadn't asked for. The following morning the rocking chair was brought to the mission, and with it a note which said, formally enough, that Captain Lamb was too busy these days to get a chance to use the chair, and wouldn't Miss Buttoner care to have it? (He was to persist in calling her Miss Buttoner. He never did call her Mrs. Mathewson.)

She ought to have sent it back, but it was too precious to renounce. She knew from the beginning that it would constitute a temptation to be at all times resisted, for it could easily lead her into ways of sloth; and she permitted herself to sit in it only when it was absolutely certain that no work remained on hand for her to do. The others of the Family were, like her, delighted with the chair—yet afraid of its possible influence. Even the Reverend Mr. Bingham himself once sat in it and rocked back and forth several times. He got up with a start, as though it had burned him, or as though he had begun to enjoy himself; but he did pronounce it to be very comfortable, very comfortable indeed.

Ann wrote a long and somewhat effusive letter of thanks, but she tore this up. She wrote a shorter, much more formal note; and she almost tore this up too; but she sent it.

So now she had a material reminder of Johnny Lamb—as though she had needed it! She thought too often of him as it was. She knew this, and scolded herself, telling herself with firmness and great good sense that she was only making herself miserable by permitting herself to think of him. The thing was hopeless. She was no longer a free agent, if she ever had been: she was a dedicated woman now. It was not like being a nun; but in one important respect, the most important, perhaps it wasn't so different, at that. Marriage was not prohibited, but it was a mighty remote possibility. And if she should ever be remarried, it would not be to anybody like Captain Lamb. He wouldn't want her, in the first place. He liked fat dark women, she told herself wryly. And she wouldn't have him if he did want her. It was true that he had a lovely smile, and true too that he was doing very well in business; but who could dream of marrying a man so steeped in sin?

So she would tell herself, waxing stern. But then a few minutes later she would walk past the rocking chair, and suddenly it was hard to concentrate on her work because of the tears hot in her eyes.

Her triumph as a liaison officer was by no means as clear afterward, as it had seemed that first night. This bullyboy was a strange one. He would sell liquor, he said, at any time to anybody who had the price. As to the whaling hands, what they did ashore—unless of course they did it to him—was not any of his business. He was known as the unofficial mayor of Honolulu, but he made as if to laugh at this. He would take absolutely no responsibility, he said. He was here to make money, and that's *all* he was here for, damn it, and nobody was going to drag him into anything else. More than once, and with a maximum of bad manners, he refused an invitation to have tea at the Mission. He liked tea, he admitted, but he liked rum better.

He was unfailingly polite to Ann Mathewson, though he would not listen to any plea to surrender the god-on-a-pole Kukailimoku. He liked Kukailimoku, he declared. It was said that the bloodthirsty old villain used to scream aloud in battle, while borne by priests of the ancient religion. He told Ann:

"And d'ye know, I half believe it."

"That's blasphemous!"

"Not necessarily."

"Captain Lamb, let me say here and now that I can have no respect for a man who panders to heathen superstitions."

He only shrugged.

"I wouldn't call it that," he said mildly.

Admittedly she had no right to ask for the idol; she only wanted it destroyed, as he knew. She glanced at him sidewise, and noted the set of his mouth, and decided against pressing her request just then. But she'd get it.

Did he retain the thing only because of its gaudiness? There was something childlike about his love of display. She remembered his quarters, the brocades, the smoking-robe. His outdoor attire customarily was showy too. His beavers, broader at the top than the bottom, always canted at a rakish angle, in white, mauve, canary yellow, were much commented upon. He strutted, fairly strutted, in tailcoats with silver buttons, in cream-colored kerseymere pantaloons, glittering Wellingtons, velvet waistcoats powdered with all sorts of designs. His was a striking figure, and he knew it.

Ann wondered about this. When they'd walk, or stand talking in some public place—they were never alone together, really—she would be conscious of the plainness of her own attire. Hers of course was professional, a mark of her calling. Was his? It was assuredly true that fine feathers impressed the natives and the traders as well, but she had a notion that there was more to it than that. He wanted to make money, yes; but he sought to express something else as well, this curious colorful combination of a peacock and a gorilla.

Once, rather shyly, he offered her a gold filigree brooch set with a diamond and several small emeralds. It was a thing he might have taken in payment of some debt. It was not garish; but it was lovely filigree work; and the emeralds, as he must have known, would have set off her eyes and hair to perfection.

Though it hurt her inside just to look at it, she refused evenly, unhesitatingly, and with proper thanks.

"We do not wear anything ornamental, Captain."

"You should. *You* should, I mean. The rest of 'em, it wouldn't make any difference."

He did not insist. He slipped the gaud into a waistcoat pocket. From the corners of her eyes she watched it disappear. She had had jewelry herself, before she married.

"Why don't *you* wear it?" she said, and could have bitten her tongue off immediately afterward.

Johnny Lamb nodded seriously, as if he knew what she meant.

"I never had any money until after I jumped ship here," he said. "My clothes were slops, anything. Pea porridge and a little hasty pudding was what we ate mostly. Fish, if we caught 'em ourselves. Meat, not more'n once a month. Turnips or parsnips sometimes, as a treat. Never any real tea from China, just stuff brewed out of raspberry leaves and blackberry leaves. Never any wheat bread, only rye-and-Injun. And of course no butter."

Here was not a whine: it was rather as though he was talking to himself, giving himself reasons for his appearance.

"When I ran away and shipped on a whaler, it was even worse. You won't ever know what that means, Miss Buttoner. I was six years at sea, and I never had more than twenty dollars in my pocket at one time—and I'd have to fight for that. It might

have been another five or six years before I'd be a skipper. I never was, you know. I was only second mate when I jumped ship here. I just call myself Captain because it sounds good for business."

"And now you are—making money?"

"I am."

"Well, I—I'm glad. If that's what you want."

"It is."

With spring, the ships went away to the whaling banks off Japan, and life on the beach at Honolulu, their twice-a-year watering place and playground, was comparatively quiet. It was then that the chiefs began to order in sandalwood.

Seeking luxuries and liquor, and having no sense of money, the chiefs, and especially the King himself, were deeply in debt to a group of Boston merchants, most of whom were represented by Johnny Lamb. They acknowledged these debts cheerfully enough; but how to pay them? The only answer was the fragrant wood. They owned all there was, since they owned everything on the islands, and the stuff was fetching eighteen gold dollars for a picul of 133 1/3 pounds in Canton. So the chiefs sent commoners up into the hills to cut sandalwood and bring it down to the beach, where Johnny Lamb, among others, but principally Johnny Lamb, saw that it was weighed and stored. This was edgy work, and Captain Johnny did not welcome a visit from the Reverend Asa Thurston, who came to remonstrate against Sabbath labor.

"Sorry, Pastor, I've got an order to fill."

The natives always came down late, which meant that the work had to be done by torchlight, attracting insects, risking fire; and they were tired and cantankerous. There was no uniformity to the carriage. The wood, a light yellow brown stripped of its bark, had been cut into sticks anywhere from six to eight feet long, a foot to eighteen inches thick, and it all had to be weighed. A man might carry four, five, six sticks. They were held to his back by means of *ti* leaves passing over the shoulders and under the arms and fastening across the chest. If any man did not bring down a heavy-enough load, he must be reported—it was the will of the chiefs—in order that he might be sent back for more the next day instead of being permitted half a week with his family. This was not a very admirable business; and Johnny Lamb rather despised himself as he went about it; but after all, he had his employers to consider.

The Reverend Thurston could not have picked a worse time. At first Johnny gave only tart answers, when he answered at all. He would step around Mr. Thurston, checking figures and muttering. But when Mr. Thurston, after an impassioned but unheeded exhortation delivered from an upright position, suddenly fell to his knees and began to pray—aloud, as he always prayed—then the bearers began to drop their bundles and back away, squealing in terror; and Johnny flew into a rage.

"Damn it, Pastor, this is too much! Get out of here!"

For every one of the ancient gods had been malevolent, so that the islanders, who still unofficially feared those gods, thought of prayer only as a calling forth of the forces of evil. *Anaana,* or praying-to-death, had been common in the old days, when it had more than once in fact resulted in the death of the accursed one. Thus prayer was a thing to avoid, to flee from.

*"Sister Mathewson, nobody could object if you embrace this opportunity to take back a report of our work."*

Johnny Lamb, knowing this, seized the Reverend Thurston by the back of his neck.

"Now see here: this has gone far enough! I've been brought up to respect the cloth, but by God, Pastor, if you don't get out of here in less than half a minute, I'll throw you out!"

It was a most deplorable incident; and there would have been no sense in making a complaint either, for the King was on one of his sprees at the time.

"You should have known better," Ann said in gentle reproach next time they met.

"*He* should have known better. He's got his work—all right, I've got mine. I don't go to the church and try to tell him how to preach a sermon, do I?"

He might have felt ashamed of himself. It was hard to tell. He was in

one of his gloomy moods, and overworked, tired.

They walked in silence awhile, through sand, coconut fronds clittering and clicking in the sunlight overhead.

Then he said abruptly:

"You ought to go home."

She stopped in her tracks.

"I have *come* home!"

"No," he said. "That's noble to say, but it ain't so. You don't belong here. No white woman does, without a husband."

"Do you *want* me to go home, Captain?"

"Not now. Not alone. With me, when I go."

"Oh. . . . You're going back?"

"Soon as I get a big enough stake. After the sandalwood's all accounted for, and the fleet's come and gone once again. Then I'm going out for the really big money. I won't get that here, ever. But I'll be a rich man at home, with the connections I've got, and the stake I'll have."

He put a hand on her hand.

"You ought to go back with me, as my wife," he said simply. "I know what you're thinking. You'd do it—you'd feel bound to shillyshally awhile, but you'd do it—you've thought it over already—if only we didn't happen to both come from Hartford."

"I'm afraid I don't know what you mean, Captain."

"Sure you do. You couldn't go back to Prospect Street as the wife of a boy who used to live down by the river."

"I never even thought of such a thing!"

"Well, listen: It won't have to be that way. It's not Hartford I'm going back to. I'm too big for Hartford already. Even over here on the other side of the world, I've got too big for it. I'm going to Boston, where I can make real money. I mean—*we*'re going. Then you won't have to wear clothes like this."

He made a gesture of disdain, indicating her dress; but it was almost as if he brushed away a fly. He was pitying her—the Lamb boy pitying a Buttoner! Those palm fronds clittered and clattered foolishly, like thin slats of wood struck together. Far out, the surf mumbled on the reef.

Ann held her head up, looking right at him.

"Am I to consider this a proposal of marriage, Captain?"

"I reckon so. I'll make it pretty, later—when I'm in a position to. I just thought I'd tell you—Boston, not Hartford."

"You're not *asking* me to marry you; you're *telling* me to!"

"Well, I reckon that's right. Yes."

She closed her eyes. Had he reached for her then, she would have fallen against him in surrender. And grasped, she would have succumbed. He shouldn't have given her an instant. She had a chance to draw a jerky scared breath, and she opened her eyes. She was fighting now, though she was not sure what. It was pure instinct, that she should resist.

"Captain Lamb, before we discuss this any further—"

"Don't see the need to discuss it any further."

"—I insist that you understand that I will have nothing to do with a man who harbors a heathen idol. Before we go any further into this subject, you must agree to hand that over to me."

She couldn't have done anything worse, for he was a stubborn man; but she'd felt, wildly, that she must do *something*. She couldn't just stand there and let him order her around.

His eyes got smaller; his mouth got longer, while his chin came out hard: there were wee freckles on the point of the chin.

"No," he said.

He was just being stubborn, that was all. Just stubborn!

She turned. She did not lower her head, but she folded her hands in front of her, preparatory to resuming the walk.

"Will you please take me back to the Mission house, Captain?"

There he sprang a surprise. The Reverend Mr. Bingham was waiting for them, and he had about him his accustomed air of accusation. He *looked* reproof, even when he tried to smile; and he did not try to smile now. Nor did Ann, doubly angry. The Reverend Mr. Bingham was a scholar, to be sure, and an unfaltering servant of the Lord; but after all there was no reason for him to be such a fussbudget. She was the only unattached white woman for thousands of miles; but that didn't mean that she could not be trusted out of sight. She knew perfectly well what they were saying about her and Johnny down on the beach. She knew, and she didn't care. The Reverend Mr. Bingham did care. And this Ann Mathewson resented. Ann wouldn't be bossed. She would not be here, she would have embraced the chance to go home on that tall Indiaman, had it not been for the complacent way in which the Reverend Mr. Bingham *assumed* that she would go. She had been tired then, and discouraged, as she was now; but she wouldn't be ordered around.

She stiffened at the sight of the preacher. The Reverend Mr. Bingham, from his expression, might have been sucking a slice of lemon; but before he could say anything, Johnny Lamb lifted his beaver and was bowing hello-and-good-by.

"There's something I should like to speak to you about, Captain," the Reverend Mr. Bingham started.

"Forgive me," said Johnny. "I have business."

He started away; but almost immediately he turned.

"Say, if you still want to build that house," he said, "go see the King now. He's expecting you, and he'll say yes this time. Good day."

In the Family it was attributed, by most, to the fact that when the King came down with delirium tremens out at Waikiki the missionaries prayed for him night and day, publicly. This was the reason for the turn-about, now that the King had recovered, they said. Ann Mathewson heard otherwise.

"You were asking to erect a two-story wooden house," pointed out James Hunnewell the trader, over a cup of tea one afternoon with Ann. He was a great help to the Family, a kindly man, God-fearing and wise. "Well, naturally the King objected. He didn't want anybody to have a house grander than his palace. So he pretended to believe that gunpowder-in-the-cellar story."

" 'Vanity of vanities . . . all is vanity and vexation of spirit.' "

"Not a bit. It's plain business. The business of being a monarch. He's got to protect his position. Even in civilized countries a king feels obliged to have the biggest house."

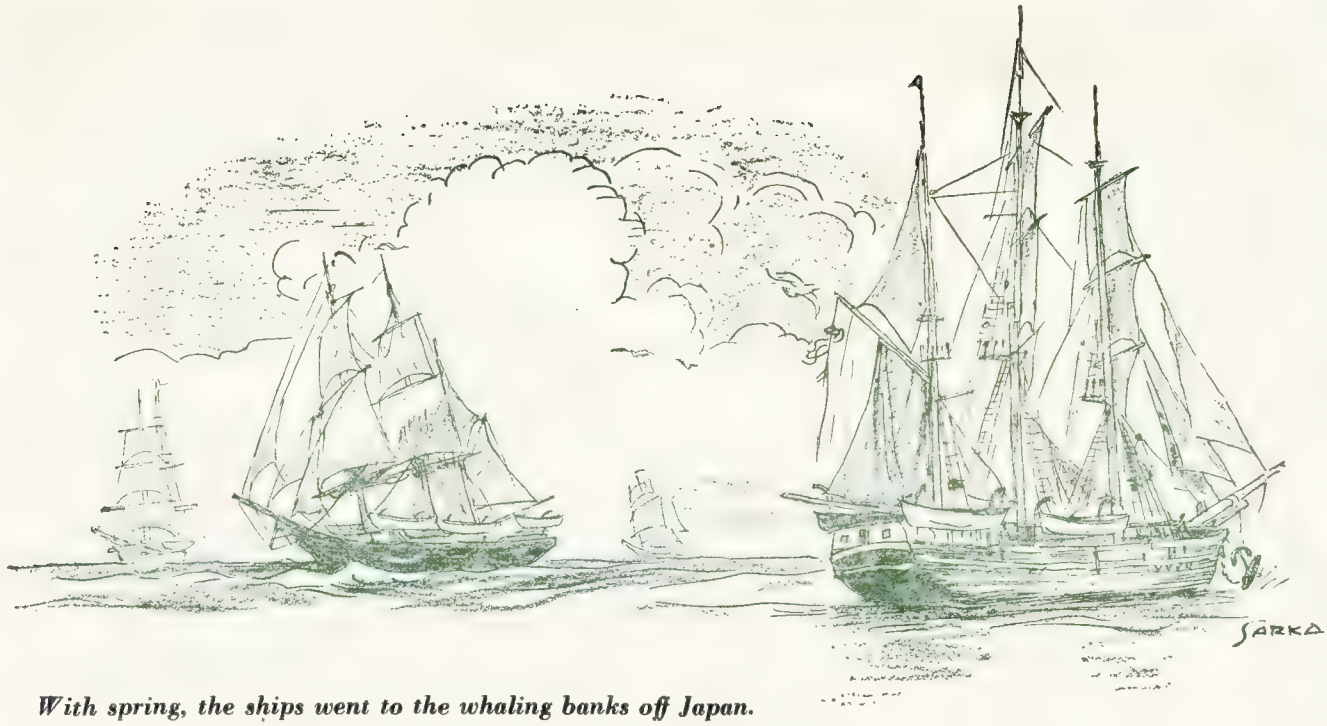
"The House of the Lord *should* be the biggest house, anywhere."

"Agreed, ma'am. But Liholiho may not see it that way. To him it is what they'd call in China a matter of face."

She asked: "Then why has he consented now?"

"Because arrangements have been made to build an even bigger palace for him. Captain Lamb suggested that right-off, and drew up the plans himself, but the King wouldn't believe it until he saw the timber and windowframes, and Johnny didn't have any to sell. Isaac Harris did; but Johnny could have blocked that, with his influence at court. He did block it for a while. He expected a timber shipment of his own, and he could have named his price. But suddenly he gave in, and recommended that the Harris stuff be bought. I don't know why. It must have cost him a pretty sum, and it ain't like Johnny Lamb to throw money away. Must be he wanted mighty bad to do a favor for you folks here."

"I see," said Ann.




*With spring, the ships went to the whaling banks off Japan.*

"He timed it so's you wouldn't start until the whalers had gone and you'd have it done by the time they get back next fall. Otherwise you might get raided. They won't like it, your getting a real house. They can see where it'll strengthen your position." He shook his head. "They're getting out of hand down there. Not even Captain Johnny the Lamb can be sure of holding them. Especially now that they think he's on your side. He's lost a pile of face. I hate to think what it might be like when that fleet comes back. . . . Thank you for the tea, ma'am. I must go."

"Do you think Captain Lamb is safe, Mr. Hunnewell?"

He looked at her, then looked down toward the beach.

"No, I don't," he said soberly. "He's going around to the other islands soon, with that prize-fighter of his. He'll clean up, too. Covers every bet offered against his man. Goes around fighting him like a cock—and Humu loves it."

"Disgusting!"

"Well. . . But it's safe enough, as far as Johnny's concerned. But he won't make much money in the outer islands, because there just ain't much there. He'll be back before the whaling fleet returns, you can lay to that. And that's when the trouble will start. They'll be more of 'em than ever. One at a time, even two or three at a time—Johnny can take that without even working up a sweat. But if they all rush him at once—"

From the doorway he looked back, looked around the hut.

"You folks keep any firearms here?"

"Certainly not! This is a house of God."

"Well, even so, it never does any harm to have a musket."

"You can ask Mr. Bingham, of course, but I'm sure he wouldn't consent to it."

"I'll do that, ma'am."

He did, and Mr. Bingham didn't. Mr. Bingham indeed was shocked by the suggestion. A gun would be evidence of a lack of faith. He hoped, he added, that Mr. Hunnewell would not speak to anybody else about this, less it bring about a belief in Honolulu that there were arms kept at the Mission house.

"They think that already," Mr. Hunnewell said. "If they didn't, I'm afraid they'd've come calling before this."

When they raised the house everybody helped, even the school children. They lined the cellar with bricks made of mud and grass; they laid the floor; they lifted beams into place. It was difficult work, chiefly because the natives who assisted refused to take it seriously. There were screams of laughter at the most inappropriate times; and when anything fell down, or conspicuously failed to fit, that was considered hilariously funny.

Also, there were too many visitors. The islanders made a party of it, a picnic. They cheered and applauded. Soon for every man or woman actually working there were at least four or five stretched full-length chatting, laughing, eating bananas. Hardly a proper way of going about the Lord's labor, it was inefficient as well. Nevertheless in time the house was assembled, a wonderful thing.

If you stood a little distance away and looked at it from under half-lowered lids, as Ann was fond of doing, you could sometimes, for a minute or two, almost fool yourself into thinking that you were home.

It was a good house, all right. It was square and gabled, of two stories, plain, clapboarded, painted of course white.

What was it that it lacked? There were no palms or hibiscus near, yet something always spoiled the illusion. The answer came to Ann suddenly one day. Rocks! Or rather, the lack of rocks. At home there were always, everywhere, rocks. There were rocks in fences. Wells were lined with rocks. Rocks were the foundations of houses, sometimes the walls as well; and slabs of rocks were paths. Rocks in fields thrust themselves up through the surface of the earth, more and more each spring, as though they were some sort of tribute offered by the forces below. Here in Hawaii there was nothing like that, no gneiss or trap, no quartzite, Stockbridge limestone, Canaan marble, stuff that could be used and would last. Why, this crumbled red porous flaky flaccid lava here, and the coral from the reef, unstable, unreliable, soft—you couldn't make a fence out of that; you couldn't make *anything* out of it!

If she could ever see snow again, if she could ever see again the gray granite of Connecticut, she'd be happy.

So it was that she suffered all that summer from the most agonizing sickness of all, homesickness. She had

*The Reverend Mr. Bingham was saying the prayer, when the first window was shattered.*

never been free of it here in the islands; but with the raising of the Mission house, and as though to match that process, step by step, beam by beam, it grew inside of her, blocking what should have been her joy at the Family's achievement. Until Johnny proposed, she had never permitted herself to dwell mentally in thoughts of home; but now it was impossible not to do so; and she suffered horribly, if without a word. He and Connecticut were inextricably mixed in her mind, so that she could no more forget the one than the other.

It was a sticky summer, anyway, the trades no longer blowing, the *kona* wind coming hot and wet out of the south. Doubtless others of the Family felt at least somewhat the way Ann did, rejoicing in public at the progress of the house, but inwardly filled with fear. They seemed to know that a climax to their efforts was coming. All their work would crash or be crowned soon, what they'd fought and slaved for, what they had come across the world to do. They could not expect funds from home, or reinforcements, if they had nothing to show. The house appeared to symbolize their labors, and as such they were proud of it. But would the house stand? That was what secretly troubled them. Slander they could endure, and insult. Stones, the torch —these might be different. The missionaries in their work were never far from the bay, the harbor, and they saw it half a hundred times a day, each time with anxious eyes. A few slatternly inter-island schooners loafed there, and the water was creased occasionally by outrigger canoes, but there was nothing large. The bay was a quiet place. It would not be quiet when the whaling fleet came back. Honolulu the village all but slumbered, smoke rising languidly from its fires, the tapping of tapa mallets a half-hearted sound, while coconut trees scarcely found the will to flutter. It would not be that way when the whalers returned.

As the missionaries went about their work their hearts were heavy with apprehension.

Then one morning they looked out —and there were the ships. By no means organized, each vessel being separately owned, and each commanded by a determined individualist, the whaling fleet nevertheless assembled almost as though somebody

had blown a whistle or fired a gun for signal. At sea they would scatter; but when the season was over, they'd make for Honolulu with a unanimity and punctuality not one of the skippers could have explained. Each knew the others would all be there; each was eager to be among the first, to drop the hook in some sound spot close-in. All day long they were coming through the pass, and all the next day and the next, until the spacious harbors, inner and outer, were crammed close to capacity. In later years some whaling skippers were to take their vessels elsewhere in the group—to Lahaina, Kailua, Hilo; but in the fall of 1821 it was all Honolulu, the biggest and noisiest and nastiest crowd the place had ever known.

Of course they stank. Whaling was a malodorous business; and even after the trades had sprung up again, the air of Honolulu was heavy and oily with fumes from the great vats where they were boiling down the blubber. Everything you touched was greasy. As for the sailors, you could smell one half a mile away, even if he was downwind of you.

These were disreputable ships, sloppy, dirty, badly kept and slow, and the men who came off them were a disreputable lot. Nobody respected a whaler hand, admittedly a man at the bottom of his profession. If there was a good seaman in the forecastle of any whaler, he was either a foreigner or a Negro, glad to take any wages, any working conditions, or an impressed hand, probably carried aboard while dead drunk; or else he was, like Johnny the Lamb, a boy from an inland town dazzled by the thought of running away to sea and knowing nothing, as a seaport boy would know, of conditions aboard a whaler.

The men poured ashore. The ships, schooners, brigs, once again squandered the sound of bells across the waters of Honolulu harbor, where for half a year nobody had cared what time it was; but they did not appear, for all that, to work on any schedule. They turned day into night, night into day. There were always some sailors coming or going, shouting, splashing, fouling one another.

For the most part the skippers encouraged this. Let 'em have their fling. Let 'em get drunk and spend all their money. There was no chance of getting into trouble with the law, because there wasn't any law, literally. Disease? Most of them were already afflicted, anyway. Some hands would desert, of course; they always did; but they'd be easily recovered. It was hard to hide on Oahu. There was no jungle, and as a result of the sandalwooders, almost no forest left. All the caves were known. Huts were one-room affairs without furniture, which could be searched with a glance; and there were no cellars. If they were going to desert, let 'em desert early and get it over with. That made it less work hauling them back.

Honolulu, then, was acting like a pot that boils over, all hissing, spitting. Not every sailor was vicious. A few actually sought out the missionaries and asked for spiritual guidance. These and other well-wishers in the village more than once warned the Lord's Anointed that a storm was brewing down there. Offers of help, specifically of arms, the Reverend Mr. Bingham refused to consider. Any sort of guard would constitute a challenge the hoodlums would feel obliged to accept, he pointed out. It would invite violence. As for a pistol, why have one, when everybody knew that you'd never use it? No, their faith was in the Lord; and this, he was sure, or said that he was sure, would be enough.

They went about their work quietly, pretending that nothing was amiss. But the natives were afraid to go to them now. School attendance fell off. Not so many natives made excuses for visiting the Mission. No longer were gifts of fruits and fish brought to the Family.

They had agreed to remain as close to the Mission house as possible while the fleet was in, and in no event to go down to the beach. They would not hide, but neither would they thrust themselves forward.

The few traders who were their friends—Mr. Hunnewell among them—were extremely busy at this season, and couldn't do much except send an occasional warning. Ann supposed that Johnny Lamb was down there again now, and that he too was busy. Since she did not hear from him, even indirectly, she could only conclude that he was still being pig-headed. She wished with all her heart that she had not made an issue of that dreadful god Kukailimoku; but she did not see how, now, she could back out of it.

If the natives stayed away from the Mission house, the seamen did not. It had never been so much stared at, even when it was being built. Most of the sailors remained in Honolulu and showed no curiosity about the rest of the island, after the manner of sailors everywhere, who grow uneasy when they find themselves even a short distance from the sea and shipping. They were not sight-seers. The waterfront itself and the inside of its brothels and grogshops were all they wanted to see ashore. Nevertheless in addition to the few who came seeking guidance, there were those who went out to Waikiki and who of course studied the Mission house on the way. There were also those who came out of sheer curiosity, and some of these were quiet and some jeered continuously at the missionaries.

On the theory that a barking dog never bites, those of the Family did not greatly fear the sailors who shouted abuse. But they could be embarrassing. They were both blasphemous and obscene, and the missionaries, quietly going about their duties in and around the house and the school, had their ears ringing all day long with lascivious words. There was nowhere they could go to get out of hearing. Faces flushed, they tried to keep from looking at one another, and moved about with eyes cast down.

They had to be careful when they went out through the front door. As

often as not they would be pelted with decayed fruit. Twice, both times after dark, windows were smashed.

These were small-boy tactics, harmless enough in themselves. The storm, when it came, would be much worse. The sailors were about to do something shameful, and they knew this, and were working up their courage for it.

The Family waited.

THEN at the end of a sultry day—a day in early October when at home the sumac would be just beginning to show scarlet at the tips—the storm broke.

There had been no sailors shouting indecencies all that day, but neither had there been any school student, child or adult, so that a curious tight stillness hung over the Mission, matching the still, taut air. They found themselves, without meaning to, walking around on tiptoe; and though nobody belabored them with lewd abuse, yet even now they did not look one another in the face.

The beach seemed unnaturally quiet too. Even the harbor, though not peaceful as it had been before the return of the fleet, was not as noisy and filled with bustle as usual: there were very few rowboats plying between ship and shore.

In the morning came two separate notes, one from Señor Francisco de Paula Marin, a trader who, though a Catholic born, had always been kind to the members of the Family, the other from Mr. Hunnewell. Worded differently, they said the same thing: There was a lot of talk on the beach about burning the Mission house, they said. It might take hours, but it would probably come to a head today. Unless a downpour of rain intervened—and there was no sign of rain—members of the Family almost certainly were due for trouble. The advice both traders gave was that they desert their new house and go to the huts of some friends farther inland. They could come back afterward, after the storm was over—if there was anything to come back to. At least they would have saved their own persons. And it might be, it *could* just conceivably be, that the mob, cheated of a confrontation, faced with an empty house, a too-easy conquest, and with nobody to curse, would turn back after only, say, smashing some more windows. At any rate, the Family ought to go away.

The Reverend Mr. Bingham read them these letters without expression, and took a vote. It was voted to stay.

There was no message in the afternoon. Ann Mathewson wondered whether Johnny was down there, and what he was doing, and whether he knew of the trouble that was brewing. It would seem certain that he knew. But then—*would* it? Perhaps just because of his recently acquired reputation as a friend of the missionaries, the news of the raid might be kept from him.

She wondered what he'd do if he did learn about it. Would he just say that he was shut of her—of all of them—though he'd never liked the others anyway—or would he risk his life, and, more important, some of his business, by interceding? It was certain that the Family wasn't popular, and just as certain that a trader's success down there in large part depended upon his personal popularity. Johnny could lose a lot of trade by publicly backing the Mission. Would he? She never had a doubt of his physical courage—he was famous as a fighter, the island rang with stories of his prowess—but how would he feel about risking some of those dollars he admittedly loved so much?

There was plenty of time to wonder about things like this, for there was nothing to do at the Mission. They went around straightening things, filling things, making up work.

The afternoon was very long.

AFTER a supper out by the taro pit, they went inside for evening prayers. It was not dark when they got to their knees, but it became dark soon afterward, abruptly, as it does in the tropics.

Reverend Mr. Bingham was saying the prayer, in that beautiful baritone of his, and they had heard no other sound, no shouting or laughing, no tramp of feet, when the first window was shattered. It was right in the room with them, and they heard the stone thud on the floor while bits of glass fell everywhere. Ann opened her eyes. Reverend Mr. Bingham was opposite her in the circle, and she saw that his forehead had been cut. Blood was running down his cheek and dribbling off his chin; but he went right on praying.

None of the others had opened their eyes. Ann closed hers. Another window was smashed, somewhere in the back of the house.

When they had "amened" and risen, it was dark, and Sybil Bingham went to the kitchen for a taper and lit a couple of candles. That brought three or four more stones, one of which fell right into the room where they were; she looked around, and they all nodded, so she blew the candles out.

"That's better," she said quietly. "Will you go out and talk to them, Hiram?"

She spoke quietly enough, but she must have been under a great strain. It was the first time any of them had ever heard her address her husband by his first name.

"I'll go out," he said.

"I will go with you," said Reverend Asa Thurston.

Ann Mathewson looked out of a window. She had never before seen so many men. They were all around the house, it seemed, though not close to it, the nearest being maybe fifty feet away. They extended as far as she could see. They were not noisy; they didn't surge and push; and this made them the more terrible to see.

"I—I don't think it's wise to go out," she whispered.

"It's our duty, Sister," Reverend Mr. Thurston said mildly.

Their appearance was greeted with some jeers but not many. Ann listened, but she could hear no fruit or stones. This was ominous.

Even when they began to preach, first one, then the other, there seemed no attempt to drown them out—yet neither were they listened to. They had fine rich voices, both of them, and often in this way, first one, then the other, alternating, they had held large audiences of islanders who did not

understand a word they said. The sailors, however, were not impressed.

She could not see the preachers from where she stood, but she could hear their voices.

A pane of glass at her elbow exploded, and a stone tumbled into the room. She stepped back from the window. They all got away from windows, standing in the middle of the room, instinctively huddled.

An arm reached in past the broken pane, and a torch of pine wood, sputtering and fizzing, was dropped to the floor. Ann and Dan Chamberlain ran to it and threw it outside again. It had started fire to one of the mats, but they stamped this out. Then they moved away from the window.

"Let us pray for rain," suggested Mr. Chamberlain. "It is the only thing that can save us now."

So they got down on their knees and prayed for an immediate shower, each praying to himself or herself, the voices of the two preachers outside the door carrying clear to them.

As they rose, another torch was tossed through a smashed window, and they put that out too.

Reverend Mr. Bingham and Reverend Mr. Thurston came back into the house. Something more than their words was needed, they said. They were making no impression at all upon the men. They feared a rush, when they would be overwhelmed. Would the others care to go outside with them? It could be that the sight of women would have a quieting effect. Nobody, of course, would be *ordered* to go out there. It was a call for volunteers.

Ann Mathewson wanted to say no. She had wanted, that morning, to vote in favor of the Family retreating to the hills with whatever it could conveniently carry; but she hadn't dared.

"I'll go out," she said now.

May Chamberlain, Lucy Thurston, Sybil Bingham, all said the same thing. Dan Chamberlain would have gone with them, but he was commanded to watch the windows from the inside, against additional

*"Get out of here, Jake! You and all the rest!" Johnny ordered.*

torches. Elisha and Ida Loomis were proselytizing on the other side of the island.

So there they stood, facing the crowd, two men, four women. Ann kept her head high. She hoped she didn't look afraid. She hoped that if they threw stones, they wouldn't hit her in the face, and especially in an eye. The thought of being hit in an eye made her almost sick.

She saw nothing definite, no one face, in the crowd, which was no more than a blur to her; and she remembered what her late husband Jabez Mathewson had told her he felt like when, badly frightened, he had preached his first sermon. It had been in a church near the seminary, far from home, where he knew no one in the congregation. He had concentrated on one place, one part of the mass of upturned faces, not a single pair of eyes, not even the top of a head, but simply a place; and he had preached to that. She tried to follow his example. She was afraid to look at the men close at hand, who were moving closer too: she sensed that. She stared hard at a spot just short of the nearest trees.

The Reverend Mr. Bingham was on her left, straddle-legged right before the door. Two men went up to him and one grabbed his arm.

"All right, psalm-singer, get out of here! Start running!"

Reverend Mr. Bingham's voice was thin with pain, but the word he answered was, *"No."*

She did not dare to look. She kept staring at the spot she had picked, and her head was high.

That was why she was the first to see the cream-colored beaver bobbing and tossing among the other heads, coming closer. Next to it, incredibly, was the god of battle Kukailimoku, bobbing like the beaver.

*"Johnny!"* she called, amazed to hear her own voice.

Johnny's deep tones answered:

*"Coming!"*

He broke through, snarling, snapping, pushing them aside. In one hand he held, like a staff, the ancient war god. It leered down upon the scene with its horrid empty eyes, its jagged yellow shark's teeth, its dry lank hair tossed this way and that. It was mounted on a stick, and it did look as if it might scream. Kukailimoku had been peaceful too long.

As for Captain Johnny the Lamb himself, except for some slight disarrangement of his clothes, he might have been dressed for a wedding. The beaver, one of his biggest, had been exactly cocked: its angle had been studied to a hair. He wore a bottle-green tailcoat with silver buttons and a high black velvet collar; there were slits at the sleeves, and it fitted him like paint. He wore a white satin stock lovingly tied. He wore a cherry-red velveteen waistcoat sprinkled with silver fleurs-de-lis.

But there was no strut about him now, no posing. He went directly to the man who gripped Reverend Mr. Bingham, and he broke the grip by spinning that man around.

"Get out of here, Jake! You and all the rest of you!"

"Listen to me, Johnny Lamb, you ain't going to—"

Johnny punched him, and he spun around twice and fell to his hands and knees. But it had been a glancing blow, and Jake started to get up again.

Johnny Lamb grinned, and he dropped the battle god and whipped off his coat.

"Good," he said. "I think I'm going to enjoy this first-rate."

As soon as Jake got up, Johnny knocked him down again. It took two punches this time. Jake was a big man.

Then Johnny reached behind him and flung open the door.

"Get back in there, all of you. I'll take care of this."

Ann started to say something, but he pushed her through the doorway without ever taking his grin from the crowd.

From just inside the door they heard him harangue the mob, and his language was horrible, worse even, in some ways—because it was so much more vehement—than the language of the jeering sailors. Yet they listened, fascinated, to every word; for after all it was, in a manner of speaking, the voice of the Lord.

"Ye yellow-bellied sots, come up here like a pack of. . . . Not one of you gets a drink again on this island, if I remember your face! Not while I have anything to say at the palace, and I have! Ye'd better turn away, ye suet bellies! Every face I see here now don't get another drink ever in Honolulu, and what's more he gets his teeth knocked down his dirty throat the second I see him again! Or even now, if that's what ye want!"

Ann Mathewson was watching through the keyhole. She saw the crowd waver. She saw Johnny stoop, and he came up swiftly with the ancient god of battle clasped in both hands, and without any hesitation at all, still roaring and cursing wildly, he waded right into them, swinging Kukailimoku right and left. They broke and ran. He ran after them, bellowing.

In the excitement, listening, appalled by what they heard, none of them in the house had noticed the smell of smoke. Now they became aware of it, and fumbled with small squeals in the darkness. Then the flame sprang upright suddenly, brilliantly. It was a mat Mr. Chamberlain and Ann had not sufficiently stamped out, and the blaze, having taken a long while to form, was fierce. It ran swiftly, snakelike, red and orange, across the room. It touched the rocking chair. It reached up with greedy fingers and caught on to the pillow Ann had made. This was stuffed with dried grass, and it burst into flame like an explosion. Right on the pillow too, right in the middle of it, was Ann's own Bible, the Bible her mother had given her. She ran toward it, but the heat drove her back. They were all yelling or screaming, running around, bumping into one another. Somebody fetched the pail from the kitchen, but there was no water left. Water was brought to them daily, and the native who did it had not come today. They were more than half a mile from shore, and there was no stream.

The flames wavered when the door flew open and Johnny the Lamb burst in. Again, he did not hesitate. Swinging Kukailimoku lustily, like the very sword-of-the-Lord-and-of-Gideon, he went for the rocking chair.

In half a minute there was no more flame. Smoke rose, the rocking chair was a wreck, and so was the god of battle; but there was no more flame.

Somebody got a candle lit. Johnny looked around at them seriously, not grinning any more.

"I'd have come sooner, if I'd known there was fuss. They kept it from me. It just happened I was coming here tonight anyway."

He looked at Ann, and now he grinned again. It was not like the grin he had shown the mob. It was gentler, warmer, and even rather shy.

"I was bringing you a present," he said. He pointed to the god. "That."

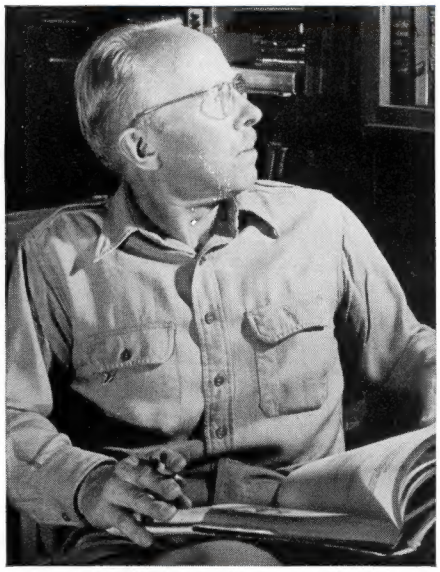
Kukailimoku had fought his last battle, had screamed, if he did scream, for the last time. The wickerwork was twisted and broken, splashed with blood in some places, burning stodgily in others. The teeth had fallen out. The hair had been torn off. Kukailimoku had fought well, but he was finished, and he lay askew, a disgrace, athwart the battered rocking chair—and right next to the Bible.

But the Bible was untouched. It alone, together with the bit of cushion it rested on, had not been reached by the flames. Even the silk ribbon in it, marking Ann's place, had not been scorched.

Johnny Lamb held out his arms to her. "Now you come here," he said.

And she did. And what they did then, the way they kissed—well, nothing like it had ever been seen in the Mission house before.

# WHO'S WHO IN THIS ISSUE



## *Paul Corey*

PAUL COREY, who wrote "The Bridge over the Grand Vallat," was born in Shelby County, Iowa, in 1903. He received his A.B. in Journalism at the University of Iowa in 1925, then joined the staff of *The Economist* in Chicago. Later, after serving on the staff of the Encyclopedia Britannica and in various other editorial capacities, he retired to a farm in Putnam County, New York, in 1931, and wrote a number of novels —"The Road Returns," "Three Miles Square," "County Seat" and others. He is something of a specialist on the subject of guerrilla warfare and during the war worked on this in connection with the First Service Command Tactical School. Married, he has one daughter.

## *William C. Gault*

HE has been writing about a dozen years and considers it more fun than working in a shoe factory or managing a hotel, both of which he has done. . . . He has one wife, two children, lives in Pacific Palisades, California. . . . He has written stories about many sports and also a long string of mysteries, but it was an auto-racing short-short which was his first published story, winning a prize in a Milwaukee newspaper fiction contest, and an auto-racing story was his first to appear in a magazine, too. His first big-time sale, to the *Saturday Evening Post,* was an auto-racing story ("Murder Car" in the June 2, 1951 issue); and now, his first to BLUE BOOK is another racing tale. His first book, "Don't Cry for Me," (published by Dutton later this year) is a mystery story of this two-war generation. During the war, Gault served with the Army in the Pacific area.

## *Brig. General Henry J. Reilly*

HENRY J. REILLY was born in Florida in 1881, the son of the Captain Henry J. Reilly who was killed in action at Peking during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900. The son studied one year each at the University of Kansas, Northwestern and Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute before he entered West Point. He was commissioned a Second Lt. of Cavalry in 1904, served for some years in the Philippines, and was instructor of History at West Point from 1911 to 1913. He resigned in 1914 and served in the ambulance service with the British and French armies in 1914 and 1915. Back in the United States as Captain of the First Illinois Field Artillery, he served on the Mexican border in 1916, and was with the 42nd (Rainbow) Division from its organization in 1917. He participated in the Battles of Luneville, Baccarat, Esperance-Souain sectors, the Aisne Marne offensive, St. Mihiel, Meuse-Argonne, and with the Army of Occupation in Germany. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal and a number of French decorations. He was with the Polish army during the Kiev Campaign in the spring of 1921 and during the Vistula Campaign in the fall; in 1925 he was with General Kuo-Sun-lin in the Manchurian Campaign. As correspondent for the Chicago *Tribune,* he traveled extensively; he was for some years publisher and editor of the *Army and Navy Journal;* and is the author of many articles and books on military subjects.

*Photo by Harris & Ewing*
BRIG. GENERAL HENRY J. REILLY

## A Letter from the Front

Hill 321 NW of Hoengsong
6 March 1951

Tomorrow we attack again. Operation Killer is over and Operation Ripper begins. The fancy names come from Corps or Army. At the battalion level it means Hill 343 tomorrow. Two days ago it was Hill 321, the day before that, Hill 303. They were easy; our losses were only 10 per cent. . . .

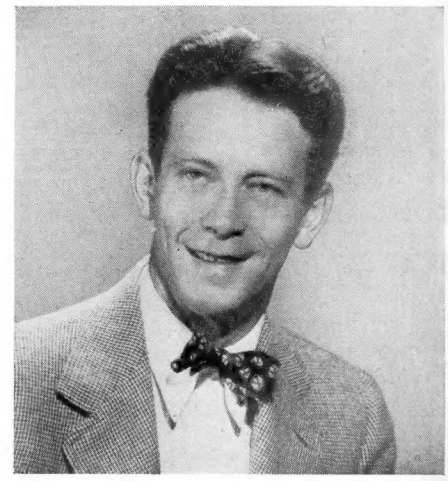
In spite of all our firepower, some of our people are going to be hurt by Chinamen armed with rifles, machine guns and mortars. Even if it is one American for ten Chinese, it isn't a fair trade.

Some things about war don't change. I'm writing this in a foxhole about seven feet long and four feet wide. It's lined with pine needles and covered with a couple of ponchos. I have a candle to write by. I'm writing on my map case. Outside, the ground is covered with snow. My hole is exactly the same as that described by Tolstoy in "War and Peace" and the same as the "Tent holes" you can still see on the farms north of Fredericksburg. My runner and I live here. Tomorrow we will dig a similar hole. There are some modern touches, though: sleeping bags, "C" rations, and my runner is reading a comic book.

Perhaps you'll remember in my story "Every Saber, Every Lance" that the trumpeter, no matter how confused the situation or how miserable the surroundings, still felt a tremendous thrill when he saw his brigade moving forward in column. I get that same feeling every time the battalion moves out. I'll have it tomorrow when I watch the green uniforms deploy in the valley.

I've asked my dear wife to send you copies of the January and February *Gazettes* which contain a long article I wrote last year on the Federal attack on Ft. Fisher in 1864. I thought you might find it of interest.

Sincerely yours,
EDWIN SIMMONS



WILLIAM C. GAULT

# BLUE BOOK

MAGAZINE ★ JULY, 1951

O'ER THE RAMPARTS *by Zachary Ball;* WEIGHT OF EVIDENCE *by Stewart Sterling;* APES COULD PLAY TENNIS *by Joel Reeve;* WHY MacARTHUR IS A GREAT GENERAL *by General Henry J. Reilly*

BLUE BOOK MAGAZINE ★ JULY 1951